American West

The land and its people

July/August 1982 $3

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July, 1773 *by Wendell Berry*
Men who made the trail *by Louis L'Amour*
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AMERICAN WEST THE WINNER

On May 5, AMERICAN WEST was awarded the 1982 **"maggie"** by the Western Publications Association for the "Best Subscription Promotion Program" of 1981. The WPA, which celebrated its 25th anniversary this year, designated the AMERICAN WEST campaign as the "Best in the West."

But then we already knew, as do our readers, that AMERICAN WEST is a winner.

Back in July of 1980, our goal was to increase our circulation through a series of direct mail promotions. At that time we had a circulation of 20,000 with a goal of 50,000 subscribers by January 1982. But even we under-estimated the allure of the West to readers across the nation. Within five months of the initiation of the program AMERICAN WEST proved to have even greater reader and advertising potential than originally projected. By January of 1982, response to subscription drives was so successful that the original goals doubled and circulation increased to 100,000 (look for the results of our initial ABC audit on this page in our next issue). AMERICAN WEST proved, and is proving beyond a doubt, that there is a market for a quality magazine that focuses on the West's unique character, traditions, and heritage in the lively spirit of the land and its people.

Our advertisers know that AMERICAN WEST is a winner also. We recently received the following letter from Joan Michelman of New York who placed her first advertisement for Clark Hulings' "Waiting" in our March/April issue.

"Please be advised that as a result of my advertising in the March/April issue of AMERICAN WEST I sold $200,000.00 worth of fine paintings. Having advertised in a number of magazines over a period of years I can honestly say that this is the first instance where a sale was a direct result of an advertisement. Furthermore, I would like to compliment you on the tasteful, and elegant, design of the magazine, as well as your commitment to intelligent and informative articles. I look forward to a continuing relationship with AMERICAN WEST."

Joan Michelman
President, Joan Michelman, Ltd.

The right product in the pages of AMERICAN WEST reaches the right buyer. The one who knows what he wants, and is still in the market looking... and buying! Join the ranks of our successful advertisers and become a winner too. Our September/October issue closes July 14.

For those of you in New Mexico, our Editor and Publisher, Tom Pew, will be chairing a panel at the Western Writers of America 29th Annual Convention in Santa Fe, which will be held from June 27th through July 1st. Tom's panel, which will be discussing "Western History from a Western Viewpoint" will be meeting at 4 PM on Monday, June 28th at The Inn at Loretto. Please feel free to attend the discussion; Tom Pew would enjoy meeting you.

Enough said. Enjoy AMERICAN WEST.

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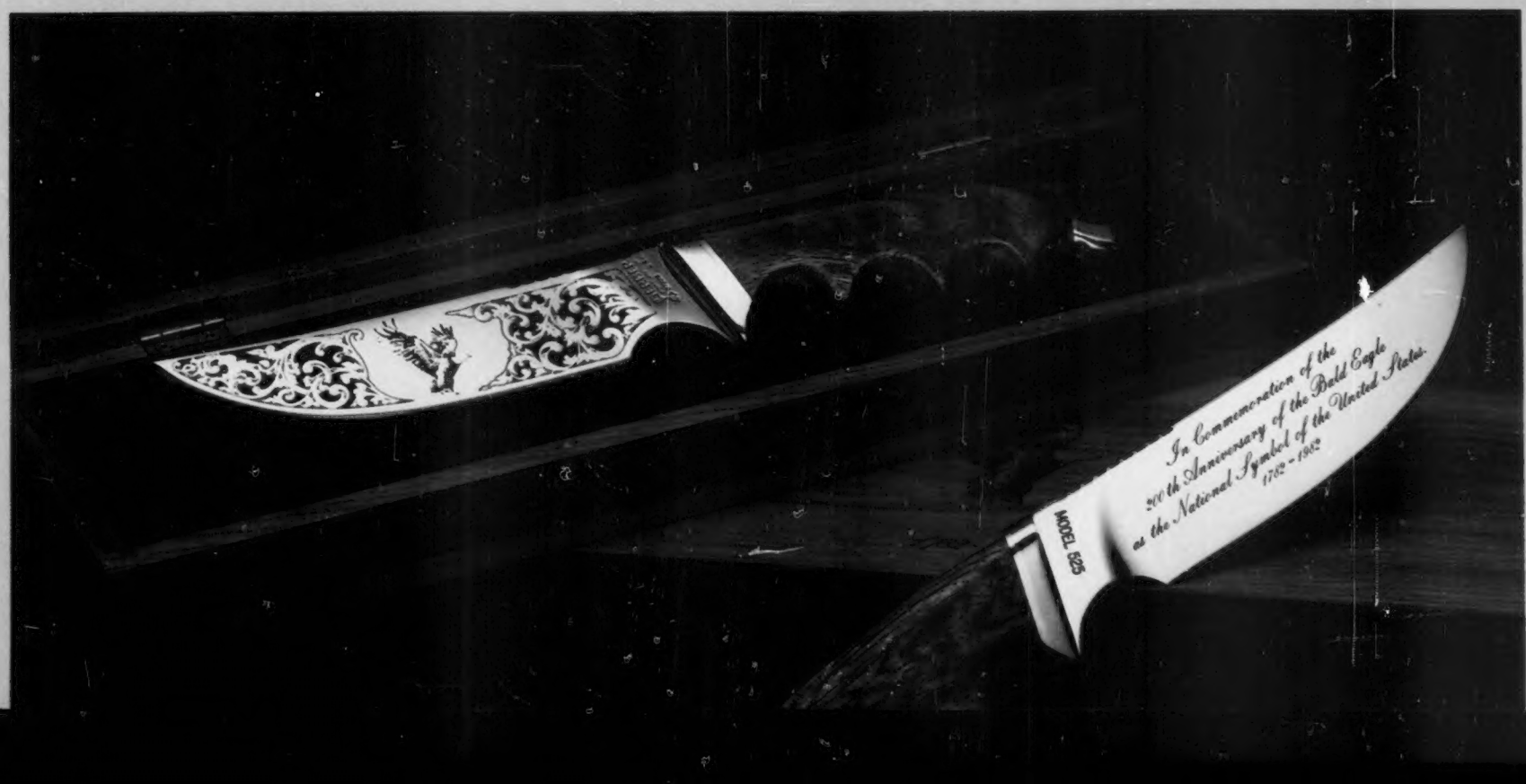
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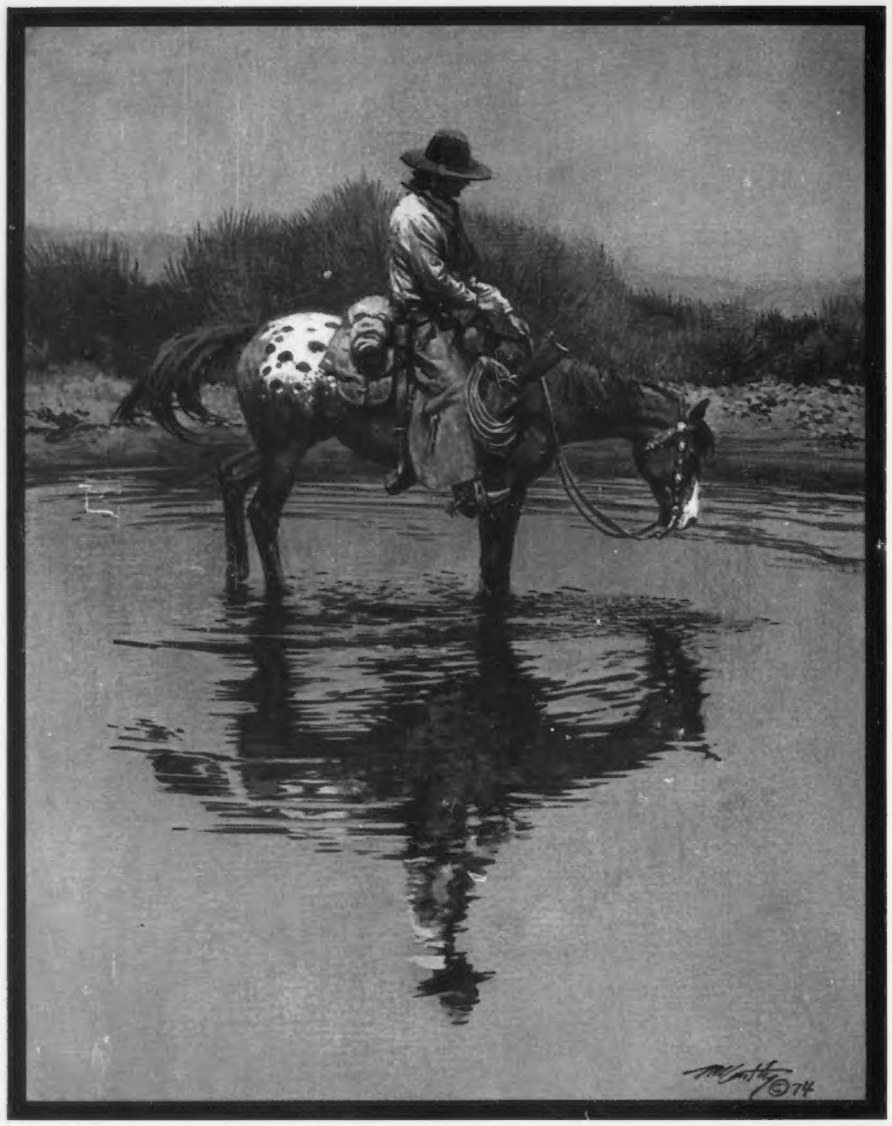

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American West

July/August 1982 Vol. XIX, No. 4

COURTESY JOHN BRUCE COLLECTION

Cover

The Story Teller
Oil on canvas, 1936, 36″ x 48″
by John Clymer (b. 1907)

Our intriguing cover picture (an illustration for a Westvaco Paper Company brochure) was painted by Western artist John Clymer while he was a student at art school in British Columbia, almost half a century ago. He tells us that he became fascinated at that time with the Northwest Coast Indians, those people who live along the shoreline from northwestern United States north to around Prince Rupert, British Columbia. Clymer had no particular tribe in mind when he painted this scene, he says; it portrays a group to whom the totem pole, that characteristic symbol of Northwest culture, was important. With magnificent coastal mountains in the background, a wise man relates to young and old a tale that continues his people's tradition of oral history. As he instructs with an admonishing finger, he holds a ceremonial rattle, a symbol of his powers. Serving also as story tellers are the several totem poles, which Clymer says represent the history of certain families. In this issue we bring you some works of American illustrators who helped create the romantic myth of the West during the early twentieth century. John Clymer says that he was "the kid" of the group, that he received help and advice from old-timers like N. C. Wyeth, Harvey Dunn, Frank Schoonover, and Dean Cornwell. Turn the pages to see some origins of "The Popular West."

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When Kentucky was the West

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Editor's Notes

Summertime arrives in the West in its own ways. On the ranches of the land, cows who cooperated with last summer's bulls have put their bawling calves on the ground. Hapless critters, calved in a Montana snowbank or beneath a prickly pear in Texas, find life beneath a full udder (green grass sprouting under hoof) bright and hopeful.

It's frisking, butterfly-chasing season in the grasslands of the country for the newborn, while the tired rancher and his family, exhausted with midwifing, eartagging, inoculating, and feeding all winter, can almost see how they'll make it through another year, meet the land payments, and lease the acres their herd requires for summer pasture. Raising cattle in the West this summer is what it's always been: A great deal of hard work by a few people who wouldn't do anything else.

In the small and medium-sized towns of the West—in places as far apart (but alike) as Billings, Montana, and Brownsville, Texas—polished pickups and customized automobiles, windows down, radios turned up—cruise main street where the occupants are seeing and being seen, and (to borrow a low-rider line) "looking good." Nothing much different is going on here than when a few generations ago boys on horseback, wearing clean shirts, or folks in buggies did the same thing on the same roads every Saturday night.

Rodeo performers on the circuit hit the highways in earnest now, dragging trailers and crisscrossing the land in all-night runs between towns, where, more often than not, they'll hit the dusty ground of some arena. For yet another summer they pit their skills in balance and nerve against a string of frog-walkin', sunfishin' broncs, hoping to end up the year no more broke (physically as well as financially) than when they started.

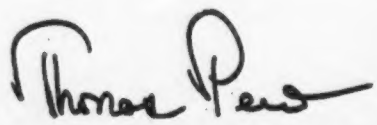
Some few cowboys will, of course, go home with prize money in their pockets and a proud, silvered, "champion" belt buckle holding up their faded jeans. For most, however, there's always the hope of next year, or maybe a lucky draw or two at the end of this season to bail a man out, and tempt him to give it another go yet another summer.

On the dude ranches of Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, and Montana the rancher and his family greet newly arriving guests, preside over meals, and keep an eye and a nose on the kids who've signed on for a summer of ranch life, washing dishes, cleaning cabins, and wrangling horses. The folks from the East limp into the dining room swapping tales of adventuresome trail rides, while at night they square dance beneath a full moon, the scent of juniper on the air.

We celebrated our own traditional Western rite of summer by taking off for two nights and days backpacking in the mountains of southern Arizona: two timeless days among the last of the melting snowdrifts watching new-grown things push up through the pine duff; two full-moon nights following the stars overhead through tree branches, listening to the owls cruise up the draws to hunt among the clearings in the mountains.

We read much today about what's dead in the West, about the demise of the Western myth (whatever that is), but when we look around us there are still cowboys (and good ones) doing the same things they've always done, there are still thousands of ranch families to care for every newborn calf as though it were their own child, and the rodeos and dude ranches we've seen lately are as fine as ever.

We'll still take our summertime in the West just as it is today and enjoy the West of the good old days as the American illustrators of the early 1900s painted it, while Louis L'Amour fine-tunes the myth of those who made the trail—in the pages of this AMERICAN WEST.



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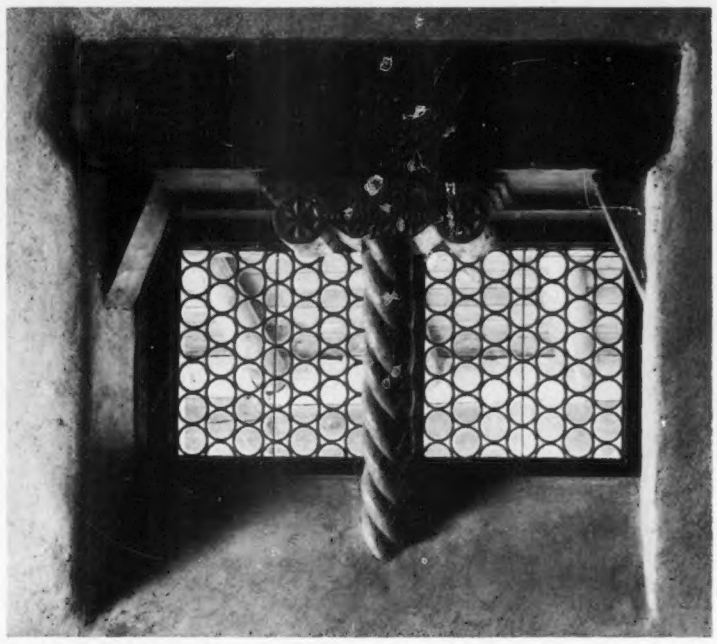

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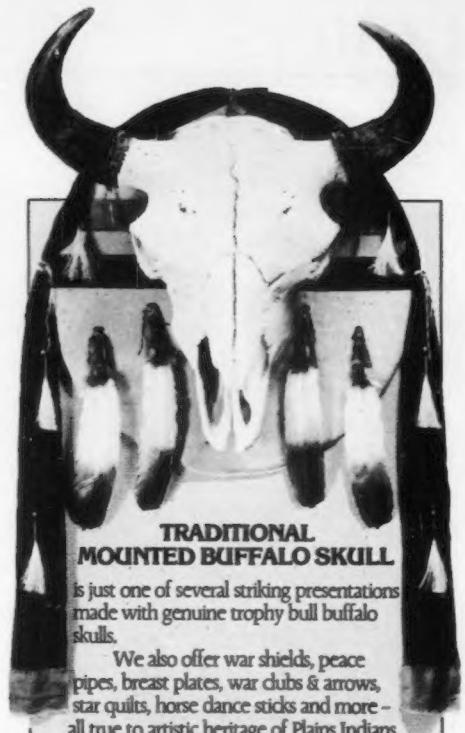

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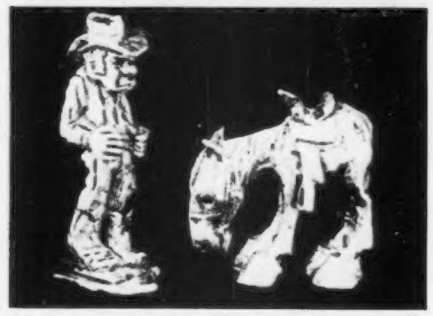

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Letters

Indian Sweat

Dear Editor:

In your March/April issue, "The Indian Sweat" by Andrew Weil was of particular interest to me. Among the papers of my grandfather, Joseph Bean Tappan (an Arizona pioneer), I found the following account of this ritual:

"In 1881 I took an open spring wagon, a pair of mules and two gentle horses that would either ride or pack and started out from Ashfork for Cataract Canyon, Arizona."

On this trip his description of the "Indian Sweat" is as follows:

"The trail dropped more steeply and we had about three miles yet to go to reach the Bridal Veil Falls below the Indian village.... Old Chief Navajo was then alive, and as luck would have it some medicine Indians from the Hopi country were there with him, with the consent of all in the village. What I saw that afternoon few white men ever saw.

"The trail brought us close to where were gathered some 20 or more Indians There was a long black oven, built after the fashion that I had seen in New Mexico, except this one was higher, longer and wider. The front opening was large enough to put a man in. They had already heated it with fire, inside and out, and had put the Chief in the oven. Whether he was there by his own aid, or with their combined help, I do not know, as I arrived just as they were taking him out of the oven, feet first. His naked body was wet with sweat from the heat of the furnace he had been in. How long he had been in there I had no means of knowing. He looked more dead than alive, yet his long coarse hair was not burned, however his arms were raised as if in pain. His lament was a sound I never heard the like of before, and no knowledge came to me in this sound as it was all the act of a few minutes.

"Meanwhile the 20 Indians were beating hard on a rawhide bound in the form of a hollow bucket, while 3 Indians grabbed Old Navajo and dipped him bodily in the running stream of Cataract Creek. Three times they dragged him

GREENWOOD

in and out, and then rolled him into a Navajo blanket. In a few moments his head was sticking out of the fold of the blanket, and if you will believe me, he was yet alive. No such treatment could a white man have lived through. I do not know how they got him back up to the Supat village unless they carried him. I did not stop to see.

My first question to Red Tom (or as he was more widely known as Blind Tom having lost an eye) was, 'How is Chief Navajo this morning?' His answer was, 'Him well, long time sick, but him well now.' And I know personally that he did live some two or three years after that treatment."

I wonder if this is the first recorded account of the Indian Sweat?

Alice Loebel
Sherman, Conn.

Dear Editor,

I wish to thank you for your beautiful magazine and to say that I am very interested in Indian history and culture. I am sick and tired of reading how ignorant Indians were and how they had to be civilized by the white man. It seems it was the other way around. No one ever comments about Indians who are trying to make a decent living and be good American citizens against tough odds and all the good things they do.

I'm more than sure that if only the white man had left the Indians by themselves without molesting them, things

(Continued on page 9)

AMERICAN WEST
is published by the
BUFFALO BILL
HISTORICAL CENTER
Cody, Wyoming

THE BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER is a nonprofit institution dedicated to preserving and exhibiting the heritage of the American West. It is also home of four major museums whose exhibits of art, ethnographic materials, and historic artifacts reflect more than one hundred years of America's colorful past. Together the museums at the Center offer an extensive view of frontier life.

The Buffalo Bill Museum, dedicated in 1927, holds the largest collection of Buffalo Bill material in the world. The Whitney Gallery of Western Art, begun in 1959, features masterworks of American painting and sculpture. The Plains Indian Museum, opened in 1969, brings to life the rich traditions of Native Americans in the West. And the Winchester Museum records the history of American firearms through the magnificent gun collection Oliver Winchester began in 1860.

Membership in the Center's Patrons' Association is open to anyone interested in America's Western heritage. Annual membership includes subscriptions to AMERICAN WEST and a quarterly newsletter, free museum admission, and discounts on museum publications. Categories are: Individual—$35, Family—$60, Centennial & Small Business—$100, Sponsor—$250, Sustaining—$500, Benefactor & Corporate—$1,000, Pahaska League—$2,000. Tax-deductible donations may be sent to Box 1000, Cody, Wyoming 82414.

An American Legend.

*"Feo, fuerte y formal."**

Painting by Everett Raymond Kinstler

John Wayne was as big as America. Straight forward, honest and tough. At a time when too few heroes existed, he was there. For over 40 years, his performances on the screen served to inspire us all. Somehow he represented everything we thought an American should be. Yet he was touchable . . . someone with whom all Americans could identify.

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A portion of the proceeds for the sale of each John Wayne Commemorative will be donated to the John Wayne Cancer Clinic, UCLA Medical Center, Los Angeles, California.

*"In the August 8, 1969 issue of Time magazine, John Wayne said he would like to be remembered in these words, which in English mean, "He was ugly, was strong and had dignity."

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Letters *(Continued from page 6)*

would have turned out different for the Indians. The war has not ended yet for the Indians. All they are getting is more broken promises. God only knows when all this bitterness toward the Indians will ever end.

Evangeline Hernandez
Benavides, Texas

Dear Editor:

As an artist who very much enjoys the Indian culture and appreciates their way of life, I have liked reading your magazine. I must build a sweat-hut.

Jo Ashback
Farmington,
New Mexico

Page numbers

Dear Editor:

As a recent subscriber to your, otherwise, excellent magazine, I would like to urge attention to the numbering of pages for the convenience of the reader.

In the May/June issue, reading the Letters to the Editor (page 6), the following represents my problem as I attempted to read my just-delivered copy today. I turn from page 6 (numbered) to page 9 (unnumbered)—no problem—to page 11 (unnumbered)—no problem—and then as directed on to page 75. But wait a minute—which is page 75? I find page 80 at the end, and page 62 and page 68. Now, what page am I looking for? And which was it referred from?

Suggestion: Why not number any page that contains any part of the articles mentioned in the Table of Contents? Or why not number any page that is not a full-page ad from one advertiser?

Doris E. Hass
Davis, Calif.

Horses versus Bears

Dear Editor:

The article in the January/February issue "Horses versus Bears" was great. I tried several times to read the part about the Allens' dog Paddy to my wife. After several attempts I gave it up—it's funny—she had to read it for herself.

(Continued on page 64)

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Joseph Velazquez

". . . I have depicted in THE WAGON GUIDE a man whose manner of dress tells us that he is more than a guide. He is a trapper, complete with a short-stock, percussion type, Hawken rifle. His hat, buckskins and moccasins are handmade. He carries three "possibles" bags and several personal momentos. The beadwork on his shirt suggests he may have an Indian wife. This is a man that has chosen to rarely visit "civilization." His independence stands as certain as his profile." J.E.V.

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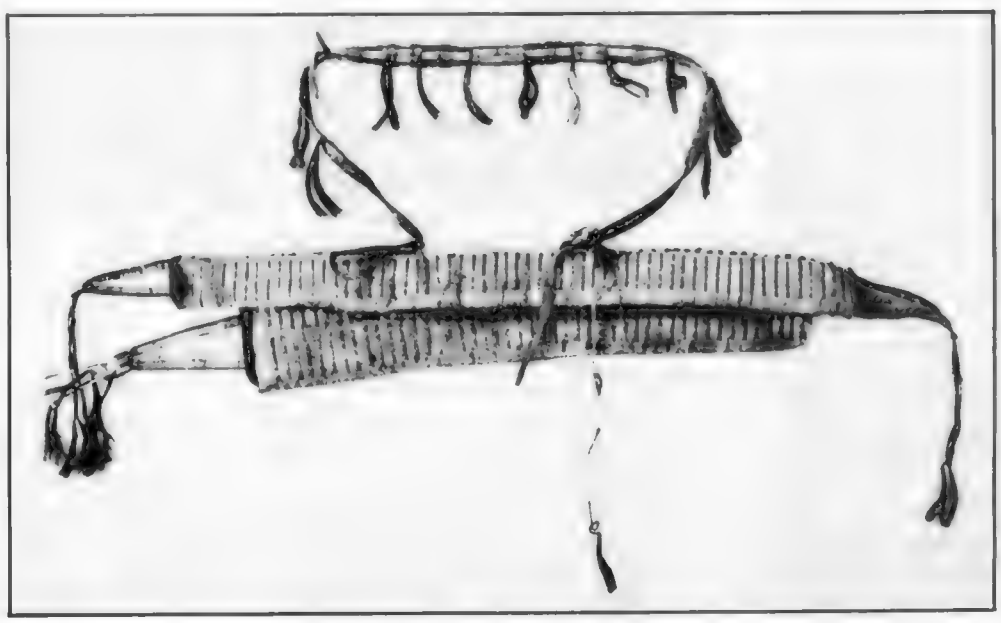

"Northern Plains Quilled and Beaded Bow/Quiver Case, Circa 1850."

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Western Lookout

Cowboys to Cheyenne. The biggest outdoor rodeo in the world, affectionately known as the "Daddy of 'em all," will take place July 23 through August 1 in Cheyenne, Wyoming. The Cheyenne Frontier Days Rodeo showcases the skills of America's best rodeo stars. The festivities also include free pancake breakfasts, Indian dances, evening entertainment by top Country Western musicians, and parades featuring one of the largest collections of old-time vehicles in the United States. The spirit of the event has been growing since September 23, 1897, when the *Cheyenne Daily Sun Leader* reported: "No more perfect day in every respect could have been designated by Providence for the first annual celebration of Frontier Days in Cheyenne....The stars and stripes and bunting adorned business houses...and everyone seemed out for a celebration."

Idaho Happenings. The Durango Collection, an extensive private collection of Navajo and Southwest American Indian weavings, will be featured at the Sun Valley Western Art Auctions July 8 through 11 at the Elkhorn Village Inn in Sun Valley, Idaho. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the Sun Valley Center for the Arts and Humanities. The Center's humanities division, The Institute of the American West, plans to hold its annual conference August 18 through 21 at the Alpenrose Hotel in Ketchum to examine the general theme "Inventing the West." During the conference, sponsored by Levi Strauss & Co., writers, filmmakers, historians, folklorists, and other participants will discuss the subtopics "Women and Work," "Vision and Myth," and "Land, Water and Wealth." Advance registration is necessary. For information, call the Institute at (208) 622-9371.

Russell Exhibit. For the first time since 1910, a major exhibit of works by Charles M. Russell is being shown in Saint Louis, Missouri—the artist's birthplace and childhood home. Oils, watercolors, pen and ink drawings, bronzes, and illustrated letters—many of them gathered from private collections—can be seen through August 29 beneath the Gateway Arch in the Museum of Westward Expansion. This free exhibit, "Charles M. Russell: American Artist" is sponsored by the Adolph Coors Company, the Missouri Committee for the Humanities, the Missouri Arts Council, and the Saint Louis Westerners.

COPPER RATTLE. COURTESY PEABODY MUSEUM—HARVARD UNIVERSITY. PHOTO BY HILLEL BURGER

Soft Gold. The days of vigorous trade between Indians and early explorers on the Pacific Northwest coast provide the focus of a major international exhibit at the Oregon Historical Society in Portland. Titled "Soft Gold," after the Russian explorers' term for furs, the exhibit features a variety of Indian artifacts made especially for trade—baskets, masks, symbolic figures, intricate carvings. These beautiful objects, gathered from collections around the world, are coming full circle as they return to the Pacific Northwest as part of this unique show. On view through October, "Soft Gold" is presented in cooperation with the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University, through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. *(See above.)*

Maggie Award. This spring the Western Publications Association selected AMERICAN WEST as the winner of the 1982 Maggie Award for Best Subscription Promotion Program. The award reflects an exceptionally strong response to the magazine's direct mail campaigns which boosted circulation from 20,000 subscribers in July 1980 to 100,000 subscribers by January 1982.

Bronco Buster. A rare 1895 Bonnard cast of Frederic Remington's bronze "Bronco Buster" attracted a record bid of $143,000 during a recent New York sale at Phillips Son & Neale. This represents the highest figure ever paid for the "Bronco Buster" and the second highest price paid at auction for any Remington bronze.

Come to Cody. In 1837 American artist Alfred Jacob Miller set out from Independence, Missouri, with an American Fur Company caravan for the Green River Rendezvous in what is today southwestern Wyoming. This summer, visitors to the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyoming, can enjoy many of the paintings and sketches Miller made on this adventure. Organized jointly by the Center, the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, and the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth, "Alfred Jacob Miller: Artist on the Oregon Trail" will continue through September 23. (See AMERICAN WEST, November/December 1981.)

Another attraction at the Buffalo Bill Historical Center is "Welcome to my West," a delightful look at the life and collections of dude rancher Larry Larom. A Princeton-educated New Yorker, Larom ran Wyoming's Valley Ranch as an exclusive hotel for families listed in New York's Social Register. This leading dude rancher and conservationist also won recognition as a collector of Indian and cowboy artifacts. "Welcome to my West" will be displayed through September.

Buffalo Chip Throw. Every July an unusual brand of world champions congregates on the main street of Chadron, Nebraska. Posing like discus throwers inside an eight-foot circle, they display a kind of classical style. Their goal is to break a distance record, hurling a dried buffalo chip about eight inches wide. This year the World Championship Buffalo Chip Throw will be held July 9, 10, and 11, continuing a six-year-old tradition during Chadron's Fur Trade Days celebration. The Throw, which uses chips from the herd at nearby Fort Robinson State Park, is one of many events designed to honor the days of the mountain men in this Pine Ridge area of northwest Nebraska.

Feria Artesana. For years, isolated villages of New Mexico have been centers of creativity for Hispanic folk art. To foster appreciation for this rich tradition, the Albuquerque Museum will gather Hispanic artists throughout the state for the third annual "Feria Artesana" August 21 and 22 in Tiquex Park. Artwork ranging from paintings and sculptures to jewelry and embroidery will be exhibited for sale; performing artists will display their talents in ballets and dramatic productions; and many of New Mexico's Hispanic writers and poets

(Continued on page 17)

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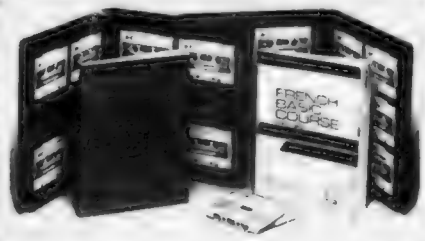

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ILLUSTRATION BY ELIZABETH TANG HERRICK

Backyard specialty Smoked Trout

by C. O. Peterson

Smoking meat to preserve it certainly isn't a new process—it's probably almost as old as sun-drying meat—but I didn't become actively interested in smoking fish until a few years ago.

Here I must back up a bit and explain "why" and "how come" I got involved in smoking trout and other fish. Since my early teens (and that was long ago), I have spent much of my spare time fishing; and during fifty-three years of married life, the Missis has cooked and eaten trout, catfish, bass, and the like until she finally declared war and refused to eat, cook, or even look at freshwater fish—especially trout. She says ....Well, never mind what she says—it wouldn't further anyone's useful education in acceptable spoken English!

I still catch fish, however, and I don't like to waste good food, especially when not-so-good hamburger costs a dollar and a half a pound. Of course I could be a "sportsman" and turn trout loose after the time and expense of catching them, but I still like to eat trout, and as they can be prepared for the table in only two or three timeworn ways, I decided to try preserving them—like finnan haddie or smoked salmon of which I am very fond.

Up here in the mountains of Montana and Idaho it is no great trick to catch trout and whitefish, and a batch to fill a "smoker" is pretty well assured. So when the freezer began to accumulate a surplus of large, dressed trout a few summers ago, I got busy rigging up a smoker.

Building a Smoker

First, I acquired a big old refrigerator. It had been ruined in a fire. I removed all of the "innards" except the wire racks. Then near the top, in the back, I cut a five-inch-diameter hole to release moisture and smoke and fitted it with a pivoted sheet-iron door to close when needed. (This smoker arrangement wasn't an original idea. I had seen one rigged this way at a cow ranch in Idaho.) Then to complete the smoker, I equipped it with a small, electric hot plate (set on the bottom, inside) and one of those tiny circulating fans that are used in some makes of refrigerators. I also hung an oven thermometer on the upper wire rack.

With about a quart of hickory chips (available in almost any market) set on the hot plate in a three-pound coffee can, I was ready for the smoking process.

Preparing the Trout

There is no hard and fast rule or recipe for preparing fish for smoking. The larger trout, more than a pound in weight, should be split open so that they lie flat, skin-side down. Smaller ones need only to be well cleaned, scaled, and beheaded. Fish under about ten inches in length should be kept for frying. They are too small for smoking.

The seasoning before smoking is a matter of choice and taste. The approved preparation is a marinade of one pound salt, one-half pound brown sugar, and a couple of ounces black pepper in one gallon of water. Soak the fish for four hours or less in the marinade. Then allow them to drain for an hour or so before you lay the fish skin-down on the racks in the smoker. Allow plenty of space for circulation of smoke around the fish on the racks. The two racks in my smoker accommodate a total of fourteen to sixteen average-sized fish or portions of fish.

My family likes to forego the marinating and simply sprinkle the fish liberally, inside and out, with table salt and black pepper about an hour before placing them in the smoker.

When the whole batch of fish has been laid out on the racks, switch on the hot plate and close the door. Lack of oxygen will cause the hickory chips to smoulder and smoke. Take a squint at the oven thermometer at half-hour intervals, and if the heat has risen to 200° or more, switch off the hot plate until the temperature drops to 100°. You can then switch it on again. It will be necessary to replace the hickory shavings several times in the smoking process.

Before I forget to mention it—for safety's sake, the smoker should be outdoors and at least ten feet from the walls of any building. Just a fire precaution.

When the fish have become brown from the smoking, open the smoke vent in the back of the smoker and turn on the little fan. I find that this method of heat-and-smoke control helps to dry the smoked fish and preserve them longer. (My big problem is to have some left to keep after the family and friends have finished "sampling" each batch.) The process of controlled heat and smoking takes about five hours for best results.

During one of my son's visits with "flatlanders" in southern California, he extolled the deliciousness of smoked trout and whitefish. When we heard these friends were coming to see us, we decided to try something new. We skinned, split, and seasoned three of the big suckers, so plentiful in the clear, cold waters of the Bitterroot River, and added these unpopular creatures to the smoker—along with a batch of trout. The visitors ate and raved about the delicious quality of the "smoked trout." When all had been demolished down to a dish of bones, my son revealed that suckers had contributed to the savory feast.

Since then we have made a practice of including several of these so-called "round-mouthed trout" with each batch of whitefish and trout in the smoker. We find the suckers surprisingly good. Of course we consider the matter of fishbones the problem of the eater; at least they help slow down the consuming of each batch fresh out of the smoker. My son suggests that the suckers be cleaned, skinned, split, and put in the freezer so that what they looked like *au naturel* can be somewhat forgotten.

Recently, family and friends sat for all of a long evening nibbling smoked fish and sipping Pink Chablis. Completely content, we let the dinner hour pass by to the delight of the womenfolk who had no meal to prepare for six husky adults or kitchen cleanup to be done.

Anyway, before you undertake to experiment with fish-smoking—first catch the fish. Amen.

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Lookout *(Continued from page 13)*

will share their works. The Albuquerque Hispano Chamber of Commerce, the Albuquerque Museum Foundation, and the City Parks and Recreation Department join the museum in sponsoring this two-day affair.

Keepers of the Fire. Jewelry of bone, shell, and feathers; beaded dresses with buckskin fringe; toys; and a variety of household tools can be admired at the Denver Museum of Natural History through August 31 as part of the exhibit "Sioux Women: Keepers of the Fire." These materials (circa 1870) from the

DENVER MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY. PHOTO BY JESSE H. BRATLEY

museum's Crane American Indian Collection illuminate the life of the *Oyate Win* or "women of the people" on the central Great Plains. Historic photographs by Edward Curtis and Jesse H. Bratley are also on display to show how these Indian women adapted to change while preserving certain traditions of the past.

Art in Arkansas. Seventy-five paintings and drawings by American artist Thomas Hart Benton (1889–1975) will be on exhibit July 15 through August 15 at the Arkansas Arts Center in Little Rock. The show, which includes many of Benton's personal favorites as well as studies for his public murals, provides insight into the creative workings of this important realist painter. Selections of pottery representing Mississippian, Caddo, and Quapaw ceramic art will be featured at the Center from August 19 through September 9 as part of the exhibit "Legacy in Clay: Ceramic Art of Pre-historic Arkansas."

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BLACK BAR LODGE

ILLUSTRATION BY JUDITH BYRON OLIVERI

Rafting a rollicking river

Inns on the wild Rogue

by Rachel Bard

The wild Rogue River in southwestern Oregon is no pushover for the explorer. And that has been its salvation.

Just as in the 1850s when the lure of gold brought miners to this corner of the West, trail and boat are the only way to reach thirty-five wilderness miles on the river between Grave Creek and Illahe. Doughty miners, trappers, and settlers hacked their way through the forests to discover the mighty gorge that the Rogue carves through the mountains on its way to the ocean. They packed goods in by horse and mule, and learned to navigate the tricky rapids in their small, wooden boats.

Though one can still see an occasional pile of gravel, rusty miner's shovel, or weathered cabin, the early visitors or residents left no serious, permanent scars on the land. So, when the official designation of the Rogue as a Wild and Scenic River came in 1968, the landscape had changed little in a hundred years. We who travel the river today are the beneficiaries.

The best way to experience the river's past while rejoicing in its still unspoiled wilderness is to take a float trip. Outfitters, including Morrison's Lodge near Galice, regularly lead raft trips of several days with overnight stops at two river inns.

Riding the Rogue can run the gamut from terrifying to boring, scorching to miserably wet. The outfitters are skilled and experienced, but when your raft bobs inexorably toward jutting rocks and crashing waves, apprehension is natural. However, on many stretches you float lazily along with the current, free to study the cliffs and hillsides or jump overboard for a swim.

Guides are quick to point out wildlife along the river: a bear busy at his fishing, grazing elk, eagles and osprey searching for their finny dinners. The guides also know where to show relics of the river's earlier, livelier days.

Most raft outfitters and kayakers put in either at Almeda Bar or Grave Creek. The scenic and not-too-difficult Rogue River Trail for hiking also takes off at Grave Creek, following the north bank of the river to Illahe. Well-spaced campgrounds are available for hikers and boaters.

First stop on many raft trips is the lodge at Black Bar, a rustic log house built by a Portland insurance man in the 1930s, where he treated his best clients to the salmon and steelhead fishing for which the river is world-famous. Today the lodge shelters rafters and kayakers, and hikers, too, if they plan ahead. Since the lodge is on the south bank and the trail on the north, foot travelers must arrange in advance for the innkeeper to row across the river to pick them up. Hearty meals are served family-style in the main house. Accommodations—not luxurious, but welcome after a damp and bumpy day on the river—are in cabins. Undeniably, part of Black Bar's charm is knowing how hard you worked to get there.

About half a day's float down from Black Bar brings rafters to Zane Grey's cabin at Winkle Bar. Although it is on private land, well-behaved visitors are welcome. Grey's first recorded landing of a fighting Rogue steelhead was in 1922, when he came to the river with noted fisherman "Lone Angler" Wilborn. Not long after, Grey bought the mining claim at Winkle Bar from a gold prospector, and from then on the little cabin was his headquarters for frequent fishing expeditions—until the North Umpqua replaced the Rogue in the author's affections.

Seven miles and a half-dozen riffles and rapids downriver stands Marial Lodge, a step above Black Bar in amenities but almost as sequestered. This lodge goes back to the early 1900s, when Marial Akeson, stepdaughter of a pioneer rancher, lived here and offered hospitality to fishermen, prospectors, hunters, and others in need of shelter. Much later, in the mid-1960s, a new owner enlarged the inn and spruced it up. Home-cooked meals as generous as those at Black Bar are served in a dining room perched over the river, a fine viewpoint for observing heron, osprey, salmon, kayakers, and other river life.

Other venerable and hospitable lodges farther downstream include Half Moon Bar and Paradise.

It is essential to reserve far in advance for these lodges and also for float trips. The Bureau of Land Management will provide an excellent annotated map of the Wild and Scenic Rogue and a list of raft outfitters. Addresses for the two river-access-only lodges are: Black Bar Lodge, P.O. Box 510, Merlin, Oregon 97532; Marial Lodge, P.O. Box 1395, Grants Pass, Oregon 97526. Both are open only in the summer.

Rachel Bard, *who has rafted the Rogue, is author of the Northwest section of* Country Inns of the Far West, *published by 101 Productions, San Francisco.*

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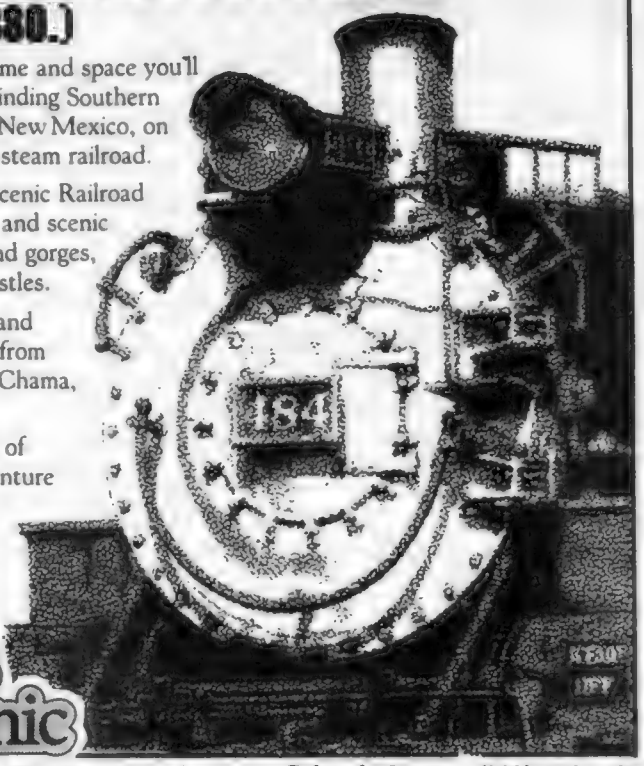

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Land of the paniolos: Ranching in paradise

by Stan Steiner

ON BALMY BEACHES BENEATH SWAYING coconut palms, the cattle were rounded up and herded into the seas. The cows were frightened by the waves. And they were awkward and reluctant swimmers, at best; so the cowboys lassoed the loudly bellowing animals and dragged them through the surf to longboats waiting nearby. Then—lashed to the gunwales by their horns and muzzles—the cattle were towed to coastal steamers anchored beyond the coral reefs several hundred feet from the shores of Hawaii.

Many of these cattle were half wild. They were brought down from pastures on the volcanic mountains in a "controlled stampede," for the cowboys did not care to get any nearer the animals than necessary. The cattle were longhorns

---

Driven by fast-working Hawaiian hands, a cow lunges into the sea where it will be roped to the gunwale of a longboat and towed to a steamer farther off shore. This scene recalls the past drama of loading time at Kailua-Kona, Hawaii.

One old cowhand explained—
We ranch between the devil, the volcanoes, and the deep blue sea.

of Mexican-Californian stock. And they were mean, sometimes vicious, creatures who would charge a man at the drop of a kerchief.

To spare the cows the burning sun of midday, the roundup by sea would often begin after midnight. In the dark it was a dangerous operation, for the waters were thick with reefs and sharks. Most feared of all was the dreaded *niuhi,* the tiger shark, which sometimes swam near shore to attack the seagoing cowboys on horseback. These attacks by sharks became an occupational hazard of roundup time in Hawaii. There were others as invigorating.

When the cattle reached the steamers, slings were tied around their bellies, and heavy ropes hoisted them from the sea. Suspended in air, they dangled like outlaws hung upon a strange nautical gallows before touching down on deck. Unleashing the sling was a hazardous job for crew members, as the cattle were unstable on their feet on the deck of the rocking ship. For many years, the roundup by sea was the only way Hawaiian ranchers could get their cattle to the markets in Honolulu. It was but one of the unique and curious ways by which ranching was adapted to the tropical, volcanic islands in the middle of the vast stretches of the Pacific Ocean.

Nowadays the herds are no longer rounded up by sea. The old cattle boat the SS *Bee* was wrecked off the coast of Maui in a tropical storm back in 1924. And the last of the floating feedlots, the SS *Humuula,* was crippled at sea in 1952. Even so, the cattle are still shipped by sea—more efficiently now, on seagoing barges that cross the deceptively calm waters that hide reefs and sharks to this day.

And the old ranchers and cowboys of Hawaii look back on those roundups by sea as nostalgically as cattlemen on the mainland reminisce about the old cattle drives to Dodge City. The roundups remain a symbol of the rugged style of ranching on the islands. Some old-timers say that because of the islands' isolation, the bygone days of ranching and the spirit of the Old West have survived more authentically in Hawaii than on the mainland. One old cowhand put it this way: "Not even using jeeps has changed the fact that we ranch between the devil, the volcanoes, and the deep blue sea."

NO ONE ON THE ISLANDS OF HAWAII had ever seen a cow before February of 1793.

That year English navigator George Vancouver landed at the Bay of Kealakekua on HMS *Discovery* with a cow and a bull. He brought the animals as gifts to the King of Hawaii, Kamehameha I, seeking to make amends for the rather impolite and bloody visit of Captain James Cook a few years before.

COURTESY W D CHILD, JR

COURTESY W D CHILD, JR

COURTESY BISHOP MUSEUM PHOTO BY FRANK DAVEY

(Above) *Roundup meant wet work for Hawaiian cowboys in the early days. Here a drenched rider leads a wild-eyed cow out from shore on the first part of a daring maneuver that brought the resisting herds to market in Honolulu. In the process, cowboys risked attack by tiger sharks.* (Opposite) *Escape is impossible for these cattle, tied fast to a longboat by their horns and muzzles. The animals were of hardy stock—descendants of cattle brought as gifts to King Kamehameha I in 1793.* (Left) *On the deck of this steamer, a powerful winch accomplishes the final task of getting the cattle on board. At a safe distance from the swinging cable, a quiet crowd watches the arrival of the newest passenger in this photo circa 1897–1900.*

COURTESY BISHOP MUSEUM. PHOTO BY A. F. MITCHELL

It took uncommon nerve in a man and sagacity in a horse to fight the monstrous and unruly herds.

(Above) *In this late nineteenth-century photograph taken at Haena on the island of Kauai, paniolos sit calmly on saddled bullocks near the shelter of a tropical tree. Among the fascinating details of this unusual scene are the rope bridles attached to a ring through the nostrils of the massive beasts.* (Opposite) *Cowboys and their families often lived in temporary quarters during shipping time. It was a hard life, but despite the lack of comforts many old-timers remember the early days as happy times.*

On the voyage from California where Vancouver had loaded four cows and two bulls at Monterey, the cattle suffered from lack of feed and water, and a cow and bull died. They were "Spanish" cattle, that is Mexican longhorns, a tough and enduring breed, but they had become so weak, said Vancouver, that they were "no longer able to stand on their feet." The second bull died on landing, and so Vancouver returned the following year with a full-grown bull, two "fine cows," and two "bull calves." He was determined to gain the favor of the Hawaiian king.

King Kamehameha ordered a *kapu,* a taboo, on the slaughter of these animals. He released them to go wild on the high mountains, and within one generation, the herds of wild cattle ranging on the lava slopes of the unfenced pastures increased to tens of thousands of tropical beasts who could neither be caught nor tamed.

In gratitude for these dubious gifts, King Kamehameha agreed to put Hawaii within the hegemony of the British Empire—or so Vancouver said. At least he thought that was the king's intent.

Not to be outdone, the American sea captain Richard Cleveland of the trader *Leila Byrd* brought a herd of horses to the islands in 1803 as a gift that would surpass England's and help persuade Kamehameha to favor the United States. Though the people "expressed wonder and admiration [for] this noble animal," the king was unimpressed, Cleveland said. Kamehameha "viewed the horse but could not be betrayed into any expression of wonder or surprise," said one report. His "want of appreciation . . . was naturally a disap-

COURTESY BISHOP MUSEUM

pointment to the donors."

By 1845 the horses had propagated as prodigiously as the cattle, and the Royal Hawaiian Agricultural Society noted "the lamentable increase of the miserable creatures," adding that "horses are evidently fast becoming a curse and a nuisance."

Like the cattle, these horses were "Spanish." As Joseph Brennan, a historian of ranching on Hawaii, has said, they were *mestanos*, the mustangs of California, "the deep chested, long winded, swift" little horses of the conquistadors, and ancestors of the Western cow ponies. On the islands they became known as Kanaka horses, the pure-blooded descendants of "Barb-Andalusian influence."

If this new diplomacy by cattle and horse trading amused Kamehameha, he gave no sign of it. The king matched the gifts of these newcomers, offering them many pigs for every cow and horse—so many that Vancouver complained he had no room on board for more pigs.

Roaming free on the mountains, the cattle turned into wild beasts. They were encompassed by dark forests of pungent eucalyptus and camphor trees, silvery kukui, and giant ferns that thwarted men on horseback. In such tangled jungles a longhorn cow could lose itself for years. "Boy" von Tempsky, an old Hawaiian cowboy who once managed the Haleakala Ranch on Maui, believed that high in the inaccessible mountains "there were places no man has ever gone."

In his nineteenth-century account *Travels in the Sandwich Islands*, Samuel S. Hill reports hearing tales "of 100,000 cattle in these mountains." So vast were the herds that *Thrum's Annual* declared that "in some districts agriculture was entirely ruined by the encroachment of wild cattle." The beasts were turning the lush forests into dry, barren plains. *The Sandwich Island Monthly* of the time declared with alarm: "Where hardly a tree is to be seen for miles we are informed by an old resident that twenty-five years ago he had lost himself with his team in the wood." The weather, as well as the vegetation, was being changed by the cattle; the *Mumuku* winds, trade winds that bring the rain, had been dried up by the destruction of the forests.

MOST LIKELY THESE STATEMENTS were made in the traditions of Western exaggeration. But, there was an element of truth in them. "The wild and ferocious herds roam unrestrained [and] multiply far from the sight of strangers," wrote one historian of the cattle industry in the early part of the century. And another historian said, "It demands no common amount of nerve in a man and sagacity in a horse to face and fight the monstrous, unruly creatures. The tales one hears of hairbreadth escapes, desperate adventure and fatal accidents...might put tiger hunting to blush and make the capture of a wild elephant seem a small thing."

The lords of King Kamehameha I decided to build stone fences along the coastal plains to keep these cattle in the mountains. On the Kona shore one such fence can still be seen; it protected the sweet potato and taro fields of the native villagers.

Something had to be done, however, to reduce the herds.

COURTESY DR J. S. PALEN

Skilled paniolos trained their mustangs to hop and skip swiftly across the precarious lava flows.

In the 1820s, King Kamehameha II ordered the hiring of "bullock hunters" to capture and kill the wild cattle. These bovine bounty hunters were a motley crew—some of them recruits from the criminal colonies of Australia and some simply adventurers who went on to found ranching dynasties. But simply killing the wild cattle was not the best solution. In time it became clear that taming and domesticating the animals offered good possibilities for trade.

In 1832 King Kamehameha III sent a royal ambassador to California to hire some Spanish-Mexican vaqueros. He brought back three adventurous cowboys named Ramon, Louzeida, and Kossuth (a Hungarian vaquero?) who taught the Hawaiians their trade. On the mountainous volcanoes the Hawaiian cowboys took over. "The imported cowboys have disappeared," the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* stated in 1859, "and in their place has sprung up a class of Hawaiian mountaineers, equally as skillful horsemen as their foreign predecessors, but leading a vagabond life...." Clearly the Hawaiians learned the vaqueros' sense of freedom as well as their horsemanship.

The Hawaiian cowboys came to call themselves paniolos, adapting their name from the word *españoles* or "Spaniards." As Sherwood Greenwell, a grandson of a pioneering rancher, said, "These Mexicans taught the Hawaiians how to be cowboys," and the paniolos soon added their indigenous touch to the vaquero style of horsemanship, riding gear, and flamboyant dress.

On their cowboy hats the paniolos placed wreaths of orchids and flowering leis. They changed the Mexican high-horned saddles into horned saddles of their own design. And they trained the Mexicans' mustangs to hop and skip across the precarious lava flows, known in Hawaii as the *ʻaʻā*.

Supplies of riding gear from the mainland were scarce, and so the paniolos created their own. The early saddles (the *noholio*) were carved in the manner of wooden gods, in a single piece of wood, from the trunks of trees like sculptured works of art. And the Hawaiian saddle horn (the *ʻōkumu*) was attached by wooden pegs without nails or lacing. On these wooden frames, rawhide was stretched and decorated with Mexican-Hawaiian motifs. So, too, the rawhide lariats (the *kaula ʻili*) of the paniolos were woven with symbols of Polynesian origin. These lariats, often one hundred feet in length, were a necessity for rounding up cattle hidden in the intricate formations of lava.

One of the more famous of the early paniolos was Ikua Purdy, who surprised his cowboy cousins on the mainland when he won the 1908 World Championship in steer roping at the Cheyenne Frontier Days Rodeo in Wyoming. Another paniolo, Archie Kaaua, was second, while a third, Jack Low, was sixth.

In Pendleton, Oregon, as in Cheyenne, the Hawaiians swept several events. The rough, bold riding of the islanders, learned on the lava flows, was what most amazed the spectators. The rugged nature of the paniolos did not fit the image of easygoing and languid native Hawaiians. Some idea of their character can be seen in their favorite cowboy yell—*Ai lepo! Ai lepo!*—which means "Eat dirt! Eat dirt!"

Life on a Hawaiian ranch was reminiscent of the Old West. An old-timer, Walter Ackerman, the son of a pioneer rancher who came to Hawaii in the early 1870s, recalled the days of his youth this way: "We all went barefooted, and we had soles like leather. Mud would be about a foot deep. Those days cows were milked in an open corral. Those days there were only dirt and gravel roads. No machinery or ice. There were no banks, and currency was unknown. No insurance those days. Everyone could be trusted. A boat came from Honolulu every ten days." Those were the happy days, he said. "Wish I could live them over again."

On the mountainsides the cattle roundup camps were crude affairs. The huts in which the cowboys stayed for weeks at a time were made of three walls of stone, open to the south, with a log fire burning to dispel the cold winds of the mountains. One description of such a camp told of a "hut fifteen by twenty feet [that had] furnished a sleeping place for twenty-five to thirty cowboys," who slept on "the ground covered with drying [and blood-smelling] hides."

IN TIME, GREAT RANCHES DEVELOPED from these pioneer beginnings. There were the Parker, Puu Waa Waa, and Greenwell spreads on Hawaii, as well as the Ulupalakua and Haleakala ranches on Maui, and many more. Some of the ranches stretched for hundreds of thousands of acres; the Parker Ranch was said to be one of the greatest family-owned ranches in the world.

All of these ranches were on royal land, for all of the land belonged to the Hawaiian crown. The Parkers had married into the royal family; the Ulupalakua Ranch, founded by Captain James Makee, had a guest house that was kept for the use of King Kalakaua; and the Greenwells had "pledged their allegiance to the monarch." As Sherwood Greenwell recalled, "On both sides of my family we were royalists."

Royal ranches might seem to be a paradox considering the traditional independence and orneriness of ranching life. These ranchers were, however, dependent on the kings for their lands whose vastness soon deprived the native Hawaiians of their own lands.

Many of the early ranches were founded by missionaries. "They say the missionaries came to do good and did well," laughed Sherwood Greenwell. "In fact, Mark Twain wrote

The 1908 Cheyenne Frontier Days Rodeo gave Hawaiian cowboys a chance to show their flare on the mainland. Ikua Purdy (right) came away with the world championship in steer roping. Manager Jack Low, who placed sixth, stands at center with second-place winner Archie Kaaua to the left.

PHOTO BY DAVID CORNWELL

A beckoning sea of green surrounds the red-roofed stables of historic Parker Ranch near Kamuela, Hawaii. The history of ranching on the islands reflects the story of this once-royal ranch. In the distance, clouds float above volcanic Mauna Kea.

about that in his 'Notes on Hawaii.' He described a Reverend who was trying to help the Hawaiians by keeping the land in the hands of the Hawaiians. And to protect some of these lands, he bought them for himself and, without putting a spade to the ground, he sold them to a 'foreigner.' And the 'foreigner' very easily could be my grandfather.'' The paniolos, like many cowboys of the West, were landless people. ''But, people have to have land or they have no roots,'' rancher Greenwell said.

With the weakening of the influence of the royal family and the eventual acquisition of Hawaii as a territory of the United States, the power of the old ranchers, who were like land barons, diminished as well. The cattle industry began to decline, and ranches came to be more valuable as real estate for condominiums, resorts, and the tourist trade.

Even the oldest and most prosperous ranches were afflicted with the economic ills suffered by ranches on the mainland, so Hawaiian ranchers diversified. The Parker Ranch opened a shopping center and a tourists' museum and restaurant. And the Greenwells not only built their own shopping center, but also began marketing orchids and subdivisions.

''To enjoy the luxury of ranching,'' said Sherwood Greenwell, laughing at his own sense of sadness, ''I don't think of myself as just a rancher anymore, but as a man who lives from the earth. No one has preserved the beauty of Hawaii any better than we have.''

On these islands, it would seem, there was not enough land for the roaming, independent, and freewheeling life-style of the cattle rancher and cowboy. But, fascination with the paniolo continued on the islands, just as the mainland preserved vivid memories of the cowboy of the Old West. The Hawaiian cowboy may be different as a man, but he seems to be the same as a symbol.

Despite his urban surroundings, resort owner Dudley Child has not forgotten life on the land. Sitting in his office in the penthouse suite of the Waikiki Trade Center, he becomes animated when he speaks—not of his palatial resorts—but of his hut of a ranch house. It is just a shack on the outside, but inside it has been modernized without changing its old appearance. He is proud of that. He is just a ''weekend rancher,'' he says, but he loves to live in the old way, riding out on roundups of his small herd.

''The countryside is so beautiful,'' Child remarks. ''You can practically hear the grass grow. Going there is like going into another world, another era. . . . If I could have made a living at that life I would have chosen that.''

No cowboy town is farther West than the town of Makawao on the island of Maui. Its archaic Main Street looks much like a set for a Hollywood Western with its wooden buildings and hitching posts amid the steaming sugarcane and pineapple plantations and forests of tropical flowers that adorn the slopes of volcanic Mount Haleakala.

The stores on Main Street are mostly empty now. Some have been boarded up. For all its tropical atmosphere, the town looks like any dying ranch town in the West.

In the local Rodeo Cafe and Bar, golden long-haired boys and girls from California seem to have taken over. Urban cowboys have reached Maui too. And though I stopped by for a beer on the afternoon of the ''Up Country Fair,'' a small, down-home sort of gathering of local people, there wasn't a cowboy within leaning distance of the bar rail.

On Main Street a cowboy did appear. He had been shopping in the Japanese supermarket. He got into his Volkswagen convertible, pulled his Stetson hat down to shade his eyes from the tropical sun, then switched on a tape of Dolly Parton, sending the music of a country-western lament echoing down the deserted Main Street.

And he drove off into the Hawaiian sunset.

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Stan Steiner, *the author of* The Ranchers: A Book of Generations *and* Dark and Dashing Horsemen, *is currently working on the story of manhood and macho in the West,* The Superb Masculinity of the West, *for the University of New Mexico Press.*

"See it, lad. Live it. There'll never be its like again, not in our time nor any other."
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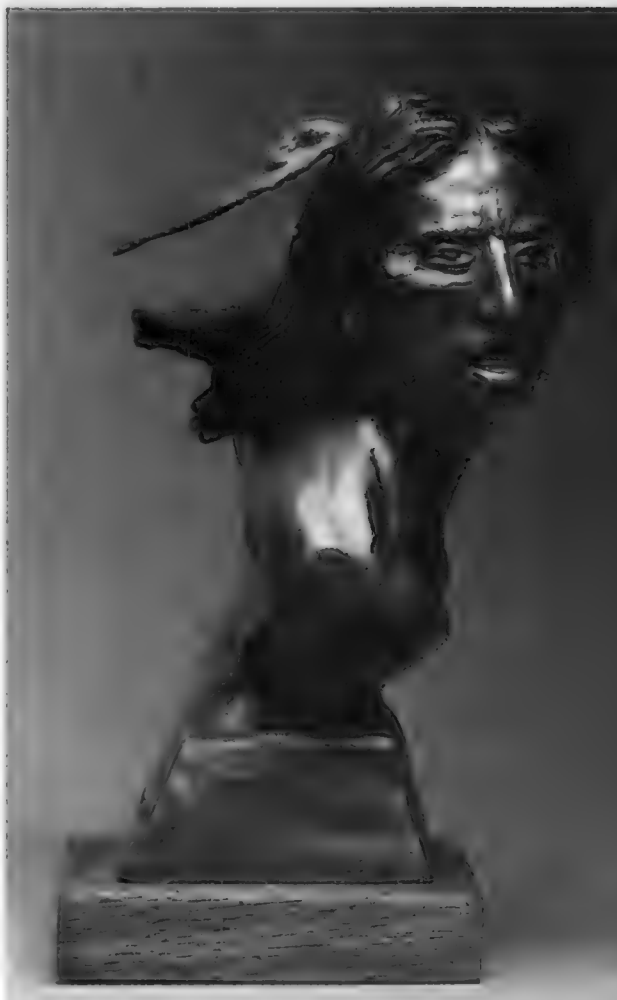

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When Kentucky was the West

July, 1773

by Wendell Berry

Seventeen seventy one
and two. In those years the fame
of the Long Hunters passed back
through the settlements, with news
of a rich and delightful country
to the west, on the waters of the Ohio.
My father and uncles held council
over their future prospects.
In the vigor of manhood and full
of enterprise, they longed to see
for themselves. They could not remain
confined in the sterile mountains
of Virginia, where only small parcels
of fertile land could be found
at any one place. As soldiers
of the Indian Wars, each had
from the governor a grant
of four hundred acres, which had only
to be located and surveyed.

And so,
having first planted their corn
about the tenth of May
in the year 1773, they set out
to visit this land of promise,
five of them, taking along
Sam Adams, a neighbor's son,
nineteen years of age.
They sought their future homes,
their fortunes, and the honor
of being among the first
in that western wilderness.

They reached the Great Kanahway,
then known as New River,
about the middle of May.
Having sent back their horses,
they selected suitable trees,
felled them, hollowed the trunks,
and so made two canoes
to carry them and their baggage:
rifles, ammunition, tomahawks,
butcher knives, blankets,
fishing tackle, and gigs.
And then, after their rough
overland passage on horseback,
how lightly and quietly they passed
over the surface of the water,
their prows breaking the reflections
of the trees in the early morning.

They entered the Ohio on
the first of June, the opening
of light on that wide water,
its stillnesses and solitudes.
Opposite the mouth of the Sciota
they saw an old French town
of nineteen or twenty houses,
hewed logs and clapboard roofs,
vacant and deserted, small
and silent among the great trees.

On June thirteenth, a Sunday,
they were met by the bearer of a letter
"to the gentlemen settlers"
from Richard Butler, a white man
who had lived at Chilicothe
with the Shawanoes several years:
"They claim an absolute rite
to all that country that you
are about to settle. It does not
lie in the power of those
who sold it to give this land.
Show a friendly countenance
to your present neighbors, the Shawanoes.
It lies in your power to have
good neighbors or bad, as they
are a people very capable
of discerning between good treatment
and ill. They expect you
to be friendly with them,
and to endeavor to restrain
the hunters from destroying the game."
And this they took to show
the means by which an All-wise
Providence opened the way
for exploration and settlement.

They camped on July fourth
at Big Bone Lick.

"It was a wonder to see
the large bones that lies there
which has been of several
large big creatures."
They used the short joints
of the backbones for stools,
and the ribs for tent poles
to stretch their blankets on.
Here they met a Delaware
about seventy years old.
Did he know anything
about these bones? He replied
that when he was a boy "they
were just so as you now see them."
And so they had come to a place
of mystery; they could not
enter except in awe.

At daylight on the morning
of July eighth, they reached
the mouth of the Kentucky River,
which they called the Lewvisa.
This was the foretold stream
that would carry them southward
into the heart of promise.
They set against its current,
reaching by nightfall the mouth
of a stream they called Eagle Creek
for the eagles they saw hovering
there, in the evening light.

And the next day went on
to the mouth of what is now
Drennon Creek, where the river
was nearly closed by a stone bar,
and there they left their boats.
They crossed a bottomland
through a forest of beech trees,
gray trunks in the shade
of gold-green foliage,
and after a mile came to
"a salt lick which was
a wonder to see—a mile
in length and one hundred yards
in breadth, & the roads that came
to that lick no man would believe
who did not see, & the woods
around that place were trod
for many miles, that there
was not as much food
as would feed one sheep."

They encountered there great numbers
of buffalo, elk, deer,
beaver, wolves, and bears.
The commotion of the herds was astonishing,
their tramplings and outcries,
the flies and the dust. There
where the salts of the ground flowed
to the light, the living blood
of that country gathered, throve
in its seasonal pulse—such
a gathering of beasts as these men
had never seen. Through the nights
they heard them, dreamed them,
seeming to comprehend them
more clearly in dream
than in eyesight, for that upwelling
and abounding, unbidden by any
man, was powerful, bright,
and brief for men like these,
as a holy vision. Waking,
they could not keep it. They did not.

Five days and six
nights they camped there,
examining the lick, killing
game, making several
surveys of land. The uplands
around the lick they found
"very good, mostly
oak timber; a great many
small creeks and branches;
scarce as much water
among them all as would
save a man's life
while he traveled across them."

One day, engaged in this work,
Uncle James and his neighbor's

son, Sam Adams, were passing
round the outskirts of the lick,
where had gathered a large herd
of the buffalo. The beasts
pressed together for the salt,
stomped, coughed, suckled
their calves, the dust rising
over their humps and horns,
their tails busy at flies.
They minded less than flies
the two men who moved
around them, thinking of other
lives, times to come.
And yet Sam Adams, boylike
perhaps, though he was nineteen
and a man in other ways,
would be diverted from his work
to gaze at the buffalo,
more numerous than all
his forefathers' cattle, oblivious
abundance, there by no man's
will—godly, he might
have thought it, had he not
thought God a man.

And why
he shot into the herd
is a question he did not answer,
anyhow until afterwards,
if at all—if he asked at all.
He saw an amplitude
so far beyond his need
he could not imagine it,
and could not let it be.
He shot.

And the herd, unskilled
in fear of such a weapon
or such a creature, ran
in clumsy terror directly
toward the spot where the boy
and the man were standing.
Agile, the boy sprang
into a leaning mulberry.
Not so young, or active,
or so used to haste,
Uncle James took shelter
behind a young hickory
whose girth was barely larger
than his own.

Then it seemed
the earth itself rose,
gathered, fled past them.
The great fall of hooves shook
ground and tree. Leaves
trembled in the one sound.
Dust hid everything
from everything. Bodies
beat against each other
in heavy flight. Black horns
sheared bark from the hickory
that protected Uncle James.

It fled. The hectic pulse
died in the ground. The dust
thinned. Day returned,
as it seemed, after nightmare.
And there was Sam Adams
looking out of his tree
at Uncle James, who looked
back, his hat now tilted.
"My good boy, you must not
venture that again."

And they walked southeast from there
two days, some thirty miles,
left a tomahawk and fish gig
at a fine spring, and marked
a gum sapling at that place.

(This poem makes extensive borrowings from various accounts of the McAfee brothers' 1773 expedition into Kentucky.)

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Essayist, poet, novelist, and farmer, **Wendell Berry** *is the author of over twenty-five books.*

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The Popular West

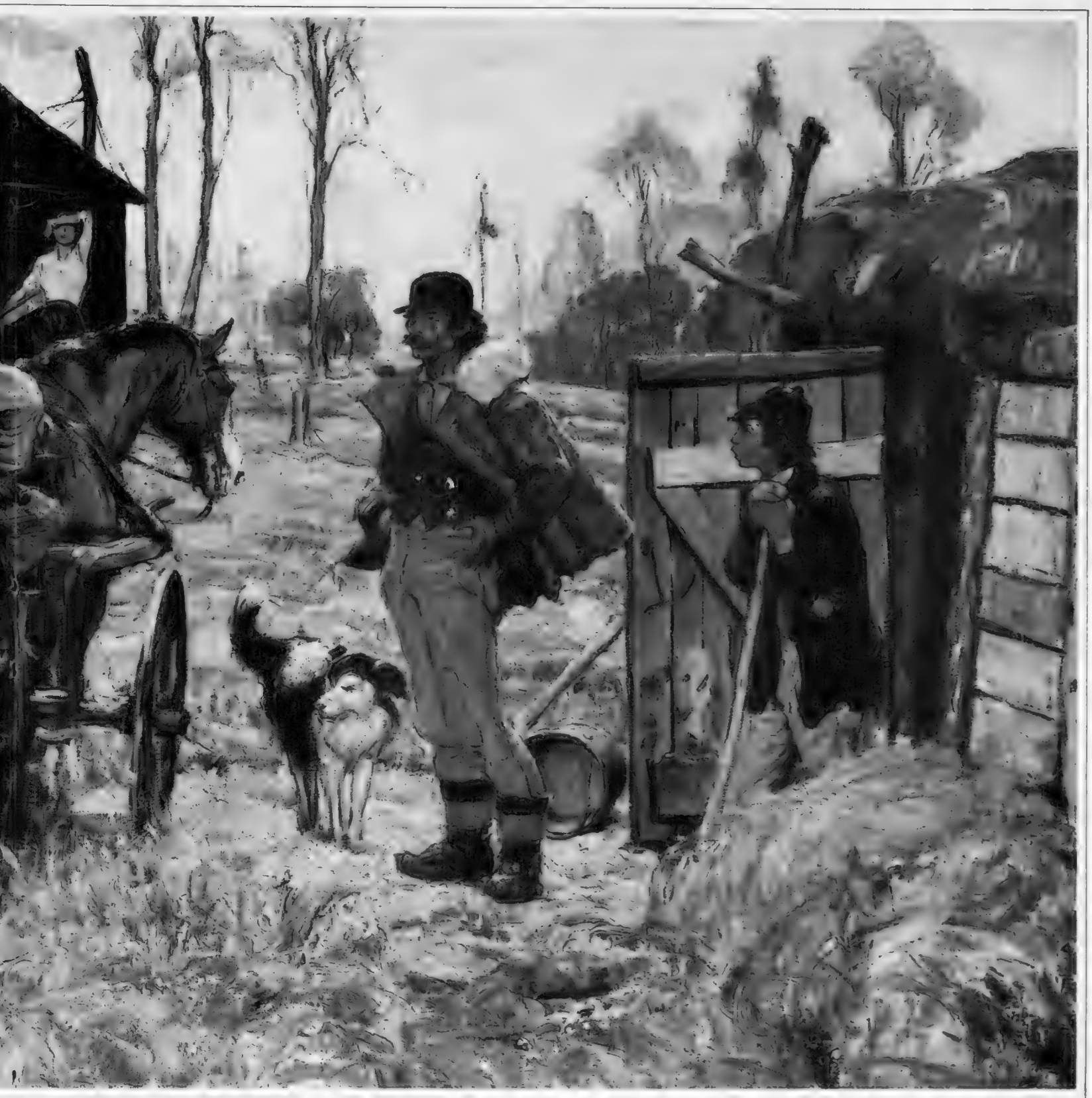
American Illustrators 1900–1940

by James K. Ballinger and Susan P. Gordon

"The Popular West: American Illustrators 1900 to 1940" is a project conceived at the Phoenix Art Museum to exhibit works by the finest American illustrators who worked during the period of greatest popularity of illustrated books and magazines. After showing at the Phoenix Art Museum during April and May, the exhibit was readied for a two-month display at the Palm Springs Desert Museum in Palm Springs, California, opening on September 21. This exhibition was made possible by grants from First Interstate Bank of Arizona, N.A., and Western Art Associates of the Phoenix Art Museum. Only a fraction of the illustrations in the exhibit is reproduced in this article.

"I AM NO LONGER AN ILLUSTRATOR," wrote Frederic Remington triumphantly to his friend John Howard on January 27, 1909, following a successful showing of his paintings at Knoedler's in New York City. Written just before Remington's death, this statement poignantly demonstrates the stigma of the term "illustration" in art history, experienced by one of America's greatest illustrators. Why does this label indicate inferiority today as it did seventy-three years ago? The idea that "illustrations" are inferior to "art" has kept much of the work included in "The Popular West" under wraps where most artists, historians, collectors, and museum curators felt it belonged. Now, with growing interest in Western American art, it is time to examine a special part of our artistic heritage that has tremendously influenced the conception of the West in literature and film.

The problem of illustration has been taken out of context in a negative manner. All art is conceived with the artist's declaration in mind, and it should be perceived with the artist's



COURTESY MIDWESTERN GALLERIES, INC., CINCINNATI

intentions understood. When viewing the works reproduced in this feature, one must remember *why* they were created and not place false expectations on their creators.

An effective illustration must compress into its size limitations an image that conveys simple, direct meaning to a mass audience. It is created with the distinct intention to narrate a specific written passage or story—in a factual, detail-oriented style that is supplemental to the written word. Unlike other works of art in an impressionistic or painterly

Harvey Dunn *(1884–1952), oil on canvas, 26" x 40"* FATHER SAT SO STILL WE ALL BEGAN TO GET NERVOUS, ESPECIALLY UNCLE JAKE. "IT'S ALL RIGHT, JOE," HE SAID. "I'LL PAY WHAT'S RIGHT FOR HER." *For "Family Style," by David Lamson,* Saturday Evening Post, *July 16, 1938.*

American illustrators helped create and nourish a romantic myth that lured pioneers toward the setting sun.

COURTESY FIRST INTERSTATE BANK OF ARIZONA, N.A., COLLECTION

Newell Convers Wyeth *(1882–1945), 1907, oil on canvas, 37½" x 24½",* (above)
FOR FOUR LONG SUMMER MONTHS OF DUST AND HEAT, CASSIDY HAD BEEN A FREIGHTER. *For "The Misadventures of Cassidy" by Edward G. Moffat,* McClure's Magazine, *May, 1908.*

William Henry Dethlef Koerner *(1878–1938), 1915, oil on canvas, 36" x 30",* (opposite)
THE STAGE STOPPED BEFORE THEM IN A CLOUD OF DUST. *For "Ann Eliza Weatherby's Trip to Town" by Muriel Dyar,* Harper's Monthly Magazine, *March, 1916.*

style, there is no attempt to bring together a larger experience to be expressed in a poetic, or even a factual manner. Such strong narrative minimizes the interpretation of the object by the viewer, thus lessening for many its artistic content. The great illustrations transcend this presumed weakness, making a statement without a written document. Their success is based solely on the artist's ability to narrate the subject with gesture, facial expression, costume, and scenery.

Most often the visual illustration is commissioned for a book or magazine such as *McClure's* or the *Saturday Evening Post*. Another type of illustration is created as an advertisement, often unaccompanied by text but with a literal impact, due to its audience. The artist is well aware of his audience once work on an illustration begins, but he also keeps in mind that this creation is a step toward a reproduction. For this reason, many illustrations are painted in grisaille (black and white) or are conceived as drawings, since their final form will be printed in black and white. As color reproductions became more common, artists adjusted by using bold colors, most often in a linear style. Norman Rockwell is perhaps the best example of this stylistic approach.

Illustration is perhaps more central to a discussion of Western American art than to any other aspect of American artistic endeavors. The major reason for this is the myth of the American West that has developed during the past two centuries as a result of a continual desire for knowledge about this region of the United States. Since President Thomas Jefferson sent Lewis and Clark into the wilderness in 1803, the American public has been fascinated with the unknown reaches of our continent.

INITIALLY, MOST ARTISTS WORKING WEST of the Mississippi River did so while they were affiliated with a government or scientific survey. Their work was used to illustrate published reports, and it had a great impact on the economic development of the West by encouraging Western settlement. Following the Civil War, interest in the West as land of opportunity intensified, and with the completion of a transcontinental railroad, the wilderness suddenly became easily accessible. The demand for information fueled the growth of popular magazines such as *Harper's Weekly* (founded 1857), *Frank Leslie's Illustrated News* (founded 1855), and *McCall's* (founded 1870). This growth immediately concentrated the need for fine illustration, a need that did not die out until the advent of television following World War II.

The first well-known illustrator in America was Felix Octavias Carr Darley whose work at mid-century graced the pages of books by Irving, Longfellow, Poe, and others. Upon the founding of Harper's publishing empire, illustrators began to be viewed as a group. Under the direction of Charles Parson, artists were brought together, and concerns for successful illustration were discussed. Parson's illustrators included Charles Reinhart, Edward A. Abbey, Arthur B. Frost, Thomas Nast, and eventually Howard Pyle, who can be considered the father of American illustration. Pyle's success as an illustrator of European myths and legends and American

COURTESY MRS. RUTH KOERNER OLIVER COLLECTION

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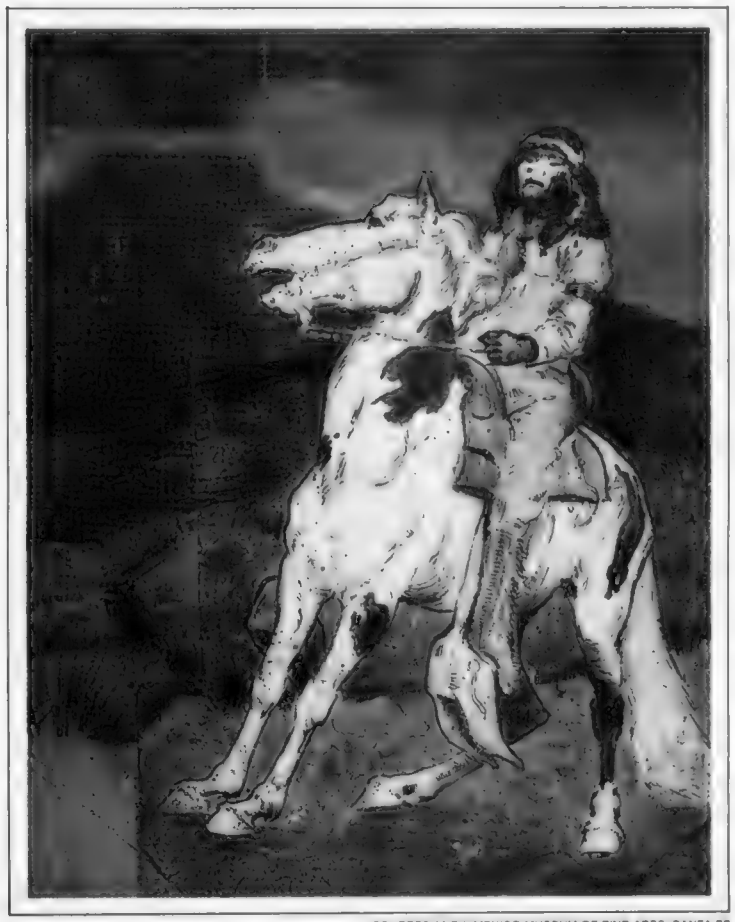
COURTESY MRS. RUTH KOERNER OLIVER COLLECTION



COURTESY NEW MEXICO MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, SANTA FE

Philip R. Goodwin *(1882–1935), n.d., oil on canvas, 29¼" x 21¾"*, (opposite)
A TIMBERLINE DRAMA. *Intended as an illustration for a publication for Brown and Bigelow.*

William Henry Dethlef Koerner *(1878–1938), oil on canvas, 28" x 40"*, (above)
THE PURSUING DUST DID NOT COME FAST, BUT IT CAME STRAIGHT HIS WAY. *For "Paso Por Aqui" by Eugene Manlove Rhodes,* Saturday Evening Post, *February 20, 1925.*

Ernest Leonard Blumenschein *(1874–1960), n.d., mixed media on paper, 9½" x 7"*, (left)
UNTITLED (INDIAN ON HORSEBACK)

COURTESY MIDWESTERN GALLERIES, INC., CINCINNATI

Dixon complained, "I am being paid to lie about the West. I'm going back home where I can do honest work."

Dean Cornwell *(1892–1960), oil on canvas, 20" x 36"*, (above)
HER REMARK THAT HE SEEMED TO BE A BORN KNITTER AND OUGHT TO DEVOTE HIS WHOLE LIFE TO IT MIGHT HAVE SEEMED INVIDIOUS TO A SENSITIVE COMMENT. *For "Ma Pettengill and The Animal Kingdom" by Harry Leon Wilson,* Saturday Evening Post, *May 11, 1918.*

Joseph Christian Leyendecker *(1874–1951), 1907, oil on canvas, 23" x 18¾"*, (opposite)
TWO O'CLOCK. *Illustration for a Howard Watch ad.*

historical subjects predated his great success as a teacher, first at the Drexel Institute in Philadelphia and later at his own school in Wilmington, Delaware, which he founded in 1901. The early years of the twentieth century brought to the fore many of Pyle's students such as Frank Schoonover, N. C. Wyeth, Philip Goodwin, and Harvey Dunn. In turn, Dean Cornwell and Harold von Schmidt were students of Dunn's.

The maturation of these artists coincided with a publishing explosion which brought about 10,000 new magazines between 1890 and 1940. Among those most profusely illustrated were *McClure's, Outing, The Delineator, Everybody's, Cosmopolitan, The Ladies' Home Journal,* and the *Saturday Evening Post*. The turn-of-the-century witnessed a shift in the content of literature regarding the American West that is best explained by Henry Nash Smith in his important work *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (Cambridge, 1950). Smith points to successive Western heroes beginning with Washington Irving's leather-stocking characters in the 1820s, the mountain men of the 1840s, and finally the "western yeomen" who settled the West during the 1880s.

Smith concludes that as the American West gradually lost its primitive character, Western literature grew more and more fictitious or romanticized. This conclusion is supported by the many stories for which illustrations in "The Popular West" were conceived. In fact, Maynard Dixon became so frustrated with demands upon him that he wrote to Charles Lummis, a Los Angeles publisher, "I am being paid to lie about the West. I'm going back home where I can do honest work." This feeling was a far cry from Remington's and

(Continued on page 45)

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Russell's efforts begun just twenty years earlier to document the dying lifestyles of various cultures of the frontier and wilderness areas of America.

THE NOSTALGIC VIEW IN WESTERN STORIES written in the 1920s required that illustrators stress genteel, Victorian aspects of the West. These can be readily seen in works such as W. H. D. Koerner's *The Stage Stopped Before Them in a Cloud of Dust,* created for Muriel Dyar's story, "Ann Eliza Weatherby's Trip to Town." The work revolves around a woman's desire to leave her monotonous farm-life, but dedication to her husband will not allow this action. Similar characterizations can be viewed in works by Dunn, Cornwell, Gayle Hoskins, and Percy V. E. Ivory, all created for literary efforts that stressed the integrity of the settlers of Western America.

Perhaps the best-known example of Western "morality plays" can be seen in Schoonover's visualization of Hopalong Cassidy, the American hero invented for Clarence Mulford's book, *The Bar-20 Three* (1921), who became a television hero during the 1950s. This example, more than any other in "The Popular West," demonstrates the impact of these artists on our understanding of the fabric of Western American culture, no matter how correct or incorrect it might be.

Given these artists' impact on American life, it is somewhat difficult to understand why the debate continues regarding their credibility as artists rather than as technicians. Norman Rockwell, the most famous illustrator of the twentieth century, best addresses the problem in his forward for *200 Years of American Illustration* (New York, 1976), a bicentennial catalogue published by the Society of Illustrators. Rockwell noted that an

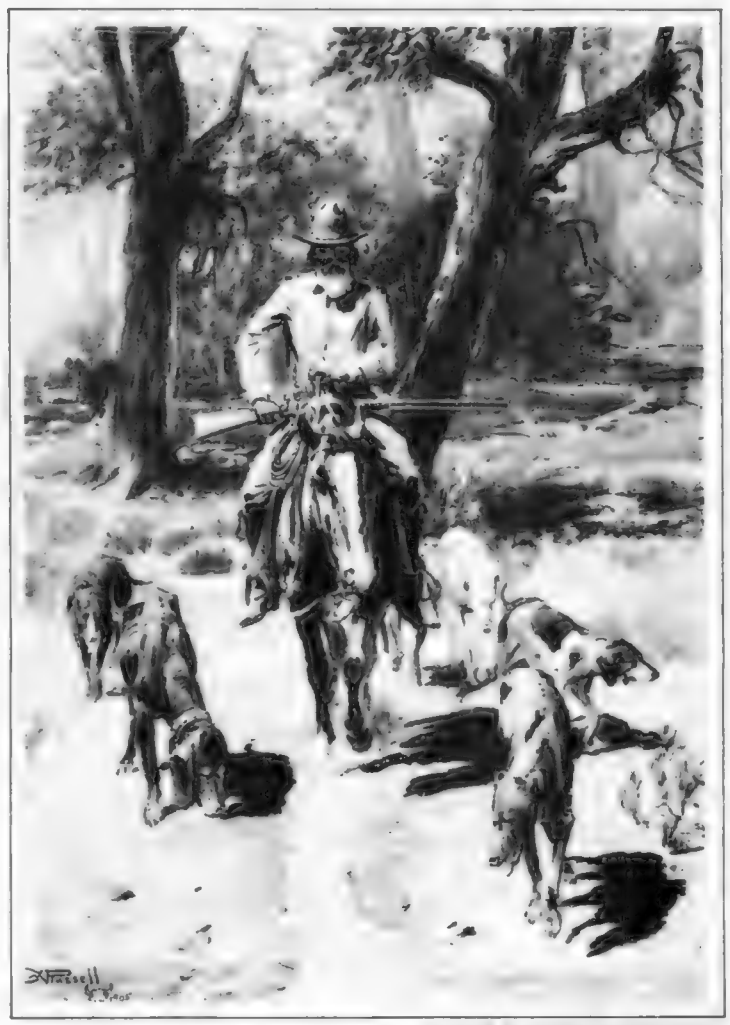
> illustration must convey its own story quickly and without demanding a great deal of scrutiny from the reader. The illustrator has, unlike the painter, a primary interest in telling a story. If he does not do that, he fails.... We paint for money, against deadlines, our subject matter often prescribed by an editor or an author. I have always felt comfortable working within these confines....The only limit to my work, really, was the limit of my own imagination.

Rockwell sees his limits in much the same way as an artist does; so, why should not the art historian carry this same understanding?

It is important to realize that illustrators of the early twentieth century documented the changing American image. These illustrators were predominantly American born and trained, with very little European influence. Their efforts can be read as social and cultural history. Their influence extends today to much of the Western American "cowboy" painting that has been produced during the past decade. And the American West again is playing a key role in the advertising images we view daily on television and in magazines.

James K. Ballinger *is the Director of the Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, Arizona.* **Susan P. Gordon** *is Assistant Curator.*

Early twentieth-century illustrators influenced much of the American "cowboy" painting of the past decade.



COURTESY VALLEY NATIONAL BANK COLLECTION

Charles Marion Russell *(1864–1926), 1905, watercolor on paper, 16" x 12"*
A HAWK-FACED OLD MAN, WITH A LONG, WHITE BEARD AND LONG, WHITE HAIR RODE OUT FROM THE COTTONWOODS. HE HAD ON A BATTERED, BROAD HAT ABNORMALLY HIGH OF CROWN, CARRIED ACROSS HIS SADDLE A HEAVY "EIGHT SQUARE" RIFLE, AND WAS FOLLOWED BY A HALF-DOZEN LOLLOPING HOUNDS. *Intended for "Uncle Jim's Yarn: The Indian Story," Part I of "Arizona Nights" by Stewart Edward White,* McClure's Magazine, *January, 1906.*

Books in their saddlebags

The men who made the trail

by Louis L'Amour

WHO WERE THE PIONEERS and frontiersmen who opened the West for settlement? What manner of men were they? Where did they come from?

In both factual writing and fiction, the Western man has been sadly misrepresented by writers who should know better, and would know better if they took the time to look. Many who are considered authorities have accepted the stereotype of the pioneer as usually poor, illiterate, and without respect for the law. All of these conclusions are wrong.

As a matter of fact, a poor man could not afford to go West by covered wagon, as the cost of six to eight head of oxen, a substantial wagon, the tools and equipment necessary, food for six to nine months, a rifle for each adult male, powder and lead, a Dutch oven, a small portable stove, etcetera was simply too great an expense. Many a West-bound pioneer sold an established, successful business or a good, working farm to finance his Westward move.

Some chroniclers of the West have failed to realize the importance of the challenge of the frontier, the lure of the unknown. To many Americans, pioneering had become a way of life. No sooner was a family established in a good situation than they began looking Westward toward the new lands. Travellers from the frontier stopped by with their stories of prairie, forest, and mountain, of roaring rivers and unknown lakes, of deer, elk, buffalo, and bear. Following a plow or selling dry goods over a counter was tame stuff when matched with such stories, and many a man and boy went to sleep at night dreaming of riding over the vast plains to the West and coming at last to the shining mountains.

Popular teller of Western tales, Louis L'Amour enjoys Western garb.

The fact is that many mountain men and cowboys were well educated for their time. Moreover, they were intelligent, which often has nothing to do with education. Whatever else the American pioneer was, he was a problem solver. He was a man who could think through to a conclusion. The frontier had a way of ridding itself of the inefficient and incapable. A man faced his problems alone or with people much like himself. There was no telephone to call the expert; he had to be the expert himself. He had to learn to make-do.

Problems did not occur occasionally but every day, and each of them had to be solved on the spot with what intelligence and skills a man could muster. The pioneer soon learned that the ability to adapt was the ability to survive. If a bit of harness broke, or a wagon wheel, a pistol, or a rifle, he made repairs himself. There was no easy shop around the corner. Men shared knowledge then as they do now, but there was always a new problem demanding a new solution.

The Spanish and the French had explored the West, crossing and recrossing plains, mountains, and deserts long before Lewis and Clark began their trek up the Missouri and over the mountains. Men of both nationalities were active in the first years of the fur trade. The greater number of pioneers in what had been the Louisiana Territory and the Spanish lands to the west were Anglo Saxon, Irish, or Scotch, but there were many other nationalities as well. And by and large they were not only thinking men, but most of them were readers. As one mountain man commented, "We had an abundance of reading matter with us. Old mountain men were all great readers."

During the great rendezvous in the mountains, men indulged in much drinking, wrestling, shooting at targets, story telling. There were also those who read, debated, and discussed, so much so that the rendezvous encampments were jokingly referred to as "Rocky Mountain College."

In *My Sixty Years On The Plains,* Billy Hamilton says, "I found the Scotchman and the Kentuckian well-educated men. The latter presented me

with a copy of Shakespeare and an ancient and modern history which he had in his pack." Necessarily, the books they carried had to be books that could be read over and over, books that provided a man with ideas that could be mulled over, discussed, and considered from every angle.

IN LATER YEARS NEARLY EVERY bunkhouse had a few battered and dog-eared books, and most mining camps had a circulating library. Some stores had such libraries but would permit the books to be read free on the premises. Books and magazines were read until they literally fell apart. One man reported in a letter home that during the summer he had read Dickens's *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *Nicholas Nickleby*. Without a doubt Charles Dickens and William Shakespeare were the favorite reading on the frontier, although when Mark Twain's *Roughing It* was published, it also became a great favorite. One merchant, who supplied wagon trains bound for California and Oregon during the period from 1829 to 1850, carried volumes by Josephus, Byron, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Scott, Fielding, Herodotus, Hume, Smollett, Milton, Defoe, Homer and Bunyan.

In those years one had to provide his own entertainment. Many men and women lived lonely lives, far from towns or even neighbors; without reading material their lives were empty indeed. Books were treasured, passed from hand to hand, and eagerly sought after.

Granville Stuart, the distinguished Montana pioneer, relates in his *Forty Years on the Frontier* an episode that illustrates this hunger for books:

"James [his brother] and I were both great readers and we had been all winter without so much as an almanac to look at. We were famished for something to read when some Indians coming from the Bitter Root told us that a white man had come up from below with a trunk full of books, and was camped with all that wealth, in Bitter Root Valley. On receipt of these glad tidings we saddled our horses, and putting our blankets and some dried meat for food on a pack horse, we started for those books, a hundred and fifty miles away, without a house or anybody on the route, and with three big, dangerous rivers to cross, the Big Blackfoot, the Hell Gate and the Bitter Root."

They found that the owner was not available and that the books had been left with another man. After much argument and persuasion, it was agreed they could have five books at five dollars each, a great sum in those days. The books they chose were a Bible (in French), finely illustrated editions of Byron and Shakespeare, Headley's *Napoleon And His Marshals*, and Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*.

Granville Stuart, I might add, touched almost every phase of Western life. He was miner, packer, trapper, cattle rancher, storekeeper, Indian fighter, and vigilante. Later, in his more settled years, he accumulated a library of several thousand books. Yet that three-hundred-mile round trip in the bitter cold, when he had to ford or swim icy rivers to get a few books, illustrates the lengths men would go in order to find something to read.

Nor was Stuart's experience exceptional. Many such stories could be told. In *Old Deadwood Days* Estelline Bennett tells of her father's library in Deadwood, a boom mining camp in the Black Hills. He had Carlyle, Burns, Macaulay, Froude, Shelley, Moore, Thoreau, and Morley's *Rise of the Dutch Republic*. Books were everywhere, she said, stacked in every corner. In *The Long Trail*, Gardner Soule remarks, "Many cowboys read the covers off any book they could find, Shakespeare, Dante, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Horatio Alger, collections of poetry, Jules Verne, etc."

The remote army posts had a difficult time keeping anything around to read. Papers and magazines usually arrived months after publication and were read to shreds. At Fort Laramie the post library had "about 300 wornout books." At another post it was decided to build a post library, and the men were asked to contribute. The Major in command offered $25, Percival Lowe (who tells the story) contributed another $25, as did the bugler, a young man named Langford Peel.

To me, this is an interesting sidelight on a man who became famous, or notorious, if that term is preferred. At the time mentioned above he was proving himself an excellent soldier and a skilled fighting man. Later he was famous as a gunfighter and is a character in my book *The Comstock Lode*.

THE MEN WHO WENT WEST were of every kind, and there is no stereotype, no typical frontiersman. By and large they were adventurous, "a reckless breed of men" as one writer has said. Most of those who came from our own country had grown up hunting meat for the table. They were already somewhat skilled in outdoor living, in hunting, and often in fighting. Others were

(Continued on page 68)

An interview with Louis L'Amour

by Frances Ring

IF EVER A MAN FIT the role of Western writer, Louis L'Amour—of towering height and craggy good looks—does.

If, as he says, "the Western is the American character," then he, more than any other chronicler in recent times, has embellished that character for a world of readers by stalking a vast frontier of historic drama and adventure.

L'Amour's contribution to celebrating the story of the West yields a series of staggering statistics: eighty novels in thirty-odd years, each title selling a million or more copies. Translated into sixteen languages, his books circle the globe from here to Tibet; as paperbacks, they are stocked in supermarkets and airports as well as in bookstores. Collectors can have leather-bound, gilt-edge volumes for a price.

Recently, I talked with L'Amour at his home in West Los Angeles. The house, appropriately enough for southern California, is a rambling, Spanish style, adobe hacienda, with sheltered patios that look out on sunny gardens. L'Amour escorted me into a large, informal living room whose walls are warmed by the colors of 1,500 shelved volumes.

The best-selling author has come a long way from North Dakota where, as a boy, he stuffed his pockets with books. His mother encouraged his reading and storytelling, but she did not live to see his success. His father, a veterinarian, had changed their family name to La Moore because people were always spelling it wrong, but when Louis started writing, he went back to the original L'Amour.

The summer that he was fifteen, L'Amour went to visit an older brother in Oklahoma. On the return trip, he was supposed to join his parents in New Mexico, but somehow connections were missed and when he arrived, his parents were gone. L'Amour took this as a signal to strike out on his own. He joined a circus, then hired on as a ranch hand, and worked his way to the West Coast. Having already reached his full height, he was able to pass himself off as twenty-two, and he shipped out as a merchant seaman to see the world.

A year in Indonesia, a bicycle-walking tour of India, and ten months in western China stoked L'Amour's imagination. Everywhere he went, he looked for a story; every person he met carried a secret tale. His early writings were poems and short stories. Not until after a World War II stint did he publish his first novel, *Westward the Tide*. The year was 1950.

Thirty years is a long time to draw on the West as a continuing source of themes. Today, new frontiers are being blazed by advancing electronics, and I asked L'Amour how strong he thought the heart of the cowboy is. Will it survive?

"We're all cowboys at heart," he answered. "But my stories are not just about cowboys. They're concerned with the pioneers who saw the West as it was—sons, brothers, and families who pulled up stakes and took a chance on the future. They came from England, Ireland, Sweden, and wherever to the New World. They touched base on the eastern seaboard and prepared for a continuing journey."

The background for L'Amour's novels comes from no less than four hundred diaries written by pioneers on the trek west from Independence, Missouri, to California. He does blanket research in history to give his stories authenticity, but history books supply just bare outlines. The diaries tell the true stories of the people. L'Amour chooses a situation and a location, puts his characters into the westward movement, and the drama unfolds. There are so many questions to answer. Why did one family leave a secure life for the unknown? Why did another stay behind? What spirited the restlessness?

We talked about the future. Can you take the man out of the West or the West out of the man? L'Amour thinks not. Times may be closing in on the land, but ranching and mining still continue in a traditional way with few variations. There are jeeps instead of horses if you're in a hurry to ride the range; there are planes that fly you over the terrain. But the love of the wide-open sprawl of a ranch is unaffected. Horseback is still the way to herd cattle, and the *real* thrill is riding the river with the herd. There are not many adventures as exhilarating as a cattle roundup.

A trip through Western wilderness is L'Amour's favorite relaxation. It is a hobby that permits him to take his work with him, and he can draw on his impressions of the land for settings in his novels. His family joins him on many of these excursions—son Beau, daughter Angelique, and wife Kathy. L'Amour searches continuously for unexplored areas, and he showed me some dramatic photographs taken by his son of vast, unpopulated vistas that varied from flat, dry ranges to secluded green ravines, viewed from a plane flying over Colorado, Wyoming, and southeast Utah.

L'Amour writes his stories in a high-ceilinged workroom with light filtered from an upper rosette window, surrounded by Western mementos and thousands of books. Bulletin boards reveal at least forty-five ideas for novels in the making. If he were a recluse, the author could probably write for years in this mine of historical information without ever leaving it. But he is an outdoorsman, and frequent pilgrimages into the real West combine with love of history and respect for the pioneer spirit to refresh the inspiration for his popular tales. ✪

Frances Ring *is a freelance writer living in Southern California and is former editor of* Westways *magazine.*

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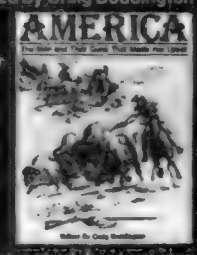
Edited by Craig Boddington



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Clarence King, adventurous geologist

King of diamonds and King of the mountains

by J. I. Merritt

GEMSTONE FEVER SWEPT SAN FRANCISCO like a box-canyon fire. Reports circulated, growing grander with each telling throughout that giddy summer of 1872, about fields of diamonds and other precious stones so plentiful they could be pried from the earth with a jackknife. Rubies as bright as a locomotive headlight. Sapphires as big as pigeon eggs. One of the city's leading tycoons and a principal investor in the reputed gem fields boasted that San Francisco would replace Amsterdam as the diamond capital of the world. Companies were formed and prospecting parties were sent into the desert to claim what everyone was calling the "new Golconda," after the ancient, half-mythical city of Hindu riches. This latest Golconda lay—somewhere—beyond the Sierra Nevada, with rumors placing it in New Mexico or Arizona.

Reports of the gemstone bonanza piqued the curiosity of Clarence King, the flamboyant young geologist directing the United States Geological Survey of the Fortieth Parallel. Relying on the shards of information available from newspaper accounts and on intimate knowledge of western terrain, King and several other members of the survey deduced that the fields had to lie, not in the Southwest as rumored, but in the northwestern corner of Colorado Territory, within the swath of the fortieth parallel survey. They determined to find the celebrated "Diamond Mesa" themselves.

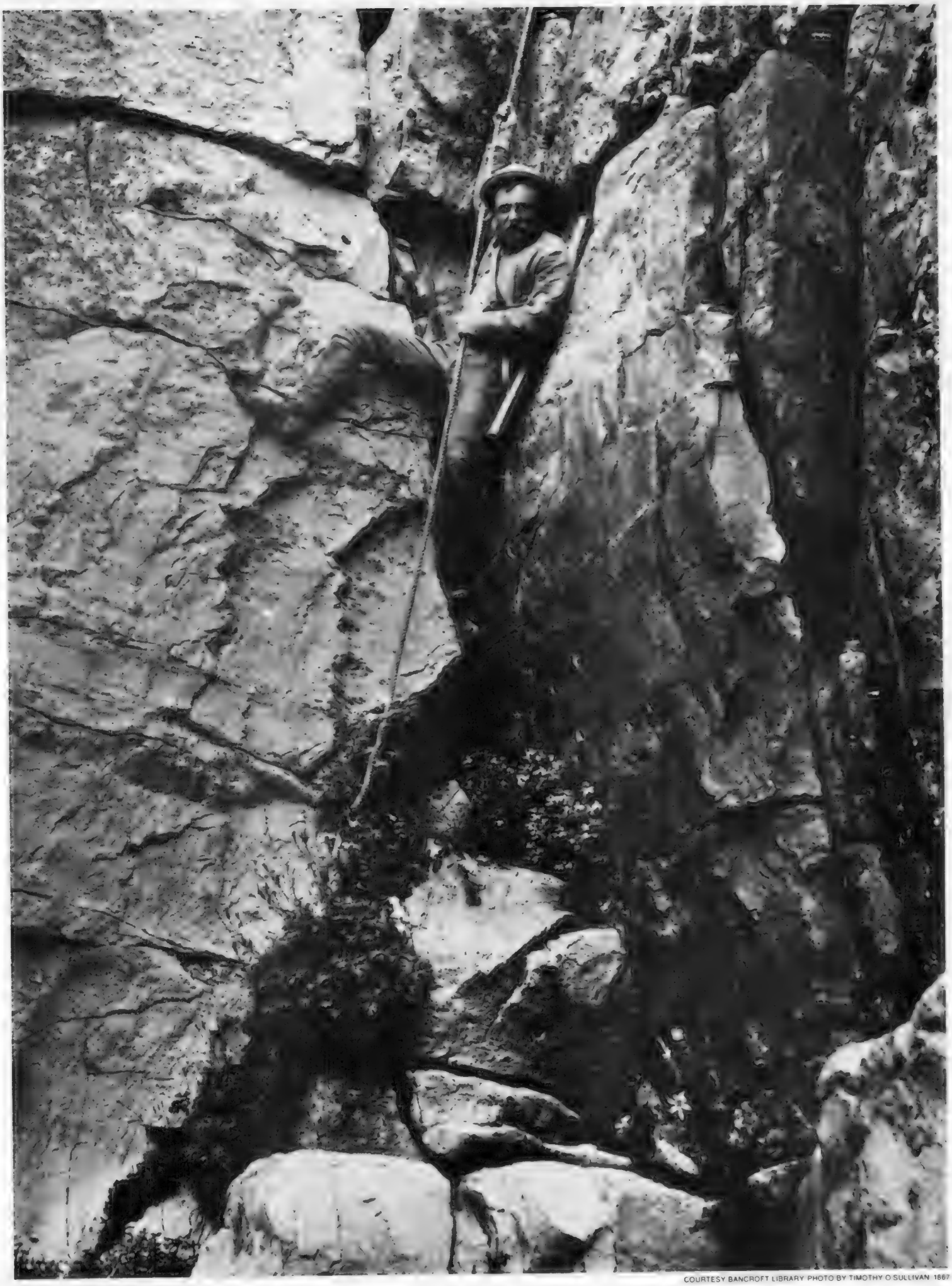
The exact whereabouts of the region remained a closely guarded secret of a company of California and East Coast entrepreneurs. For $600,000 they had bought all mineral rights to the fields from a pair of grizzled prospectors named Philip Arnold and John Slack, who a year before had walked out of the desert with a sackful of diamonds which were duly assayed and found to be genuine by jewelers Willis of San Francisco and Tiffany of New York. A report from the company's mining consultant, the eminent Henry Janin, assuaged any lingering skepticism. Janin personally inspected the fields and estimated their production value at a million dollars a month—on a par with the fabled Comstock Lode.

Although the autumn season had come and snow threatened in the mountains, King and his fellows took the Central Pacific Railroad to Fort Bridger, Wyoming Territory, in October and hastily outfitted for a trek on horseback into the bleak country to the south. A five-day, 150-mile ride into the teeth of subzero winds brought them to a tabletop region of pine and sagebrush matching Janin's published description of the diamond area. Mining claims posted along a narrow gulch bore Janin's name. Farther down the gulch King and his companions came upon a sandstone ledge where gritty soil bore weathered footprints. They dismounted and began to search. It took only a minute to find the first ruby, then another and another, then several diamonds. The excitement of the find was tempered the following day as they began to inspect the grounds more closely. King found everywhere the same twelve-to-one ratio of rubies to diamonds; gems were plentiful in exposed areas but rare in hard-to-reach spots; combinations of stones that would never occur in nature were found; and diamonds were concentrated near the surface but did not appear at bedrock where their high specific gravity would have naturally caused them to settle. When King spied a diamond balanced on a rock "in a position from which one heavy wind or the storm of a single winter must inevitably dislodge it," the whiff of fraud became a stink.

Having determined that the fields were salted, King rose early the next day and rode hard to the nearest station on the rail line to pick up the first westbound train for San Francisco. His revelation of fraud to the diamond investment group was a bombshell that left Janin and the company directors shaken. A subsequent investigation confirmed the findings of the young geologist, and the following public announcement burst the diamond bubble that had been in the making. In another month the company's stock would have gone on the market, bringing an inevitable crash that could have wrecked the San Francisco Stock Exchange. A grand jury later found that Arnold and Slack had played their gambit with $35,000 worth of rough gems purchased in London several years before. But the wily prospectors had long since fled the scene—Slack to New Mexico and Arnold (the apparent mastermind) to Kentucky, where he lived in a grand style on the take from his mighty flimflam. Arnold's duping of the keenest minds in finance made him a folk hero toasted in every Bay Area saloon.

THE OTHER HERO TO EMERGE FROM THE GREAT Diamond Hoax was the dashing, thirty-year-old Clarence King,

The "best and brightest" of his generation, Clarence King combined an adventurous and romantic spirit with scientific skill to lead the first survey that systematically mapped a great portion of the West, reported its geologic history, and described its principal mining districts.



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COURTESY UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

who reveled in being lionized as the saviour of the financial community and the paragon of science in the service of the people. *The Nation* pointed to King's exposure of the diamond fraud as a shining example of the benefits of the government surveys, whose value Congress had recently debated. The San Francisco *Evening Bulletin* emphasized "the practical value, in the ordinary business of society, of scientific education and research." King's mentor, California state geologist Josiah D. Whitney, spoke for the entire country when he asked, "Who's the King of Diamonds now? And isn't he trumps?"

King basked in the national limelight and wore the crown conferred on him by Whitney as his due. Few men in America believed in themselves so completely, and for King the episode must have seemed (almost literally) but one more jewel in a life sparkling with achievement. He had already distinguished himself as a scientist, adventurer, and man of letters—"the best and brightest of his generation," his friend John Hay would later say of him. Another close friend, Henry Adams, regarded King as an exemplar of dynamism: his "physical energy, social standing, mental scope and training, wit, geniality, and science...seemed superlatively American and irresistibly strong."

King's precocity and vaulting self-confidence were a kind of birthright. Born in Newport, Rhode Island, in 1842, the scion of a merchant family, King grew up in a matriarchal environment, showered with affection from his widowed young mother, younger sister, and a loving black nurse. The other great influence on his childhood was his maternal grandmother, an abolitionist active in the underground railroad who imbued her grandson with an underlying respect for people of color.

Young Clarence's education was always paramount with his mother, who sent him to the best schools she could afford. In due course, King enrolled at the Sheffield Scientific School at Yale, where he proved to be a star pupil in chemistry and other physical sciences, graduating in 1862. At Sheffield, King also received a solid grounding in the dynamic new science of geology, a discipline that in a few short decades had revealed a startling picture of the earth, far older and more complex than anything suggested in Genesis.

King's personality was an unusual blend of scientist and romantic; given these tendencies, it is not surprising that he was drawn to the West. He revelled in Albert Bierstadt's western panoramas and Washington Irving's history of the Rocky mountain fur trade, the reports of John Charles Frémont on his explorations of Nevada and California, and Major Theodore Winthrop's embellished accounts of the Pacific Northwest. The exposed flanks of the great Western cordillera also made the West an ideal place to study earth history, and it was as a Western field geologist that King saw the chance to fulfill both his esthetic and scientific goals. In the spring of 1863, armed with a letter of introduction from Yale geologist James Dwight Dana, he started overland to join the California survey of Josiah Whitney.

King's personality was an unusual blend of scientist and romantic. The West lured him irresistibly.

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(Opposite) *Fresh out of Yale, Clarence King posed with other members of the California Geological Survey, which provided him valuable field experience. Left to right are James T. Gardiner, Richard D. Cotter, William H. Brewer, and King.* (Above) *As director of the United States Geological Survey of the Fortieth Parallel, King is pictured at Uintah Lake in Utah. While leading a rugged life in the field King maintained his debonair dress, including a fur-collared, caped greatcoat.*

King vowed to climb Mount Whitney, but his attempt that summer failed. The mountain remained an obsession.

Crossing the plains with a wagon caravan, King could scarcely contain his enthusiasm for the awesome country that opened up before him. In typical hell-bent-for-leather fashion, he once plunged his horse into a rampaging herd of buffalo. An enraged bull knocked his mount to the ground, pinning down King while a mile-and-one-half column of bison stampeded past, but it was just his luck to escape with only a sprain. King lost his horse but gained the first of many stories that, told and retold around campfires (and later in fashionable salons of New York and London) would make him one of the most celebrated raconteurs of his day.

ZEAL FOR THE SERIOUS WORK of the California survey did not preclude all mountaineering adventure. King was first to climb Mount Tyndall (which he named after an eminent British geologist), and from its summit he glimpsed to the south what was certain to be the highest peak in the United States—the brooding, helmet-shaped presence he called Mount Whitney. King vowed to climb it, but his attempt on the mountain later that summer failed several hundred feet short of the summit, when he found his way blocked by an impassable wall. Mount Whitney remained an obsession, and he swore he would be back.

In the winter of 1865 King and topographer James T. Gardiner were dispatched on temporary duty with the U.S. Army to map military roads through Arizona. The territory was swarming with Yavapai and Walapai braves itching for a fight with the invading whites. Moving ahead of their escort one day, the surveyors were suddenly surrounded by fifty Indians with drawn bows. Aware of recent accounts of the torture of whites by Indians, King felt that their only hope was to stall. He and Gardiner kept cool and began to demonstrate their surveying instruments to the puzzled warriors. The Indians' curiosity quickly wore thin, however, and the young men were ordered to strip while a fire was prepared. But the delay proved long enough, and in the best horse-opera fashion, the escort appeared at last and routed the party of braves. The story of this narrow escape became one of King's favorites in his vast repertoire of adventure tales.

King spent three years with the Whitney survey, acquiring the field expertise that led to his appointment in 1867 as director of the United States Geological Survey of the Fortieth Parallel, the first of the pioneering national surveys for systematically mapping the West. As King envisioned it, the survey would represent a hundred-mile-wide cross section of the continent from the Sierra Nevada to the Rockies, roughly following the line of the Central Pacific Railroad then under construction. In his field organization and choice of staff, the young geologist demonstrated that confidence in him was not misplaced. King was determined that the survey's scientific results should be on a par with the best European surveys, and without neglecting the practical matters of cartography and mining geology, he placed particular emphasis on discoveries that would advance the basic scientific understanding of the region.

Geology had been mainly a field science up to this time, but King engaged young laboratory geologists whose application of chemistry and physics to the study of rocks would revolutionize the discipline. Their laboratory training complemented the field experience of King, who posed the questions for his disciples to investigate in the field. He was the first American geologist to bring the physical sciences of chemistry and physics to bear on geological questions. Today we would think of King primarily as a theoretical geophysicist—interpreting data gathered by others and evolving hypotheses leading to new lines of inquiry.

Despite his pressing responsibilities as a scientific administrator, King still found time for adventure along the fortieth parallel. The conquest of Mount Whitney remained a personal goal, and in June, 1871, he made a special trip to the Kern Plateau to challenge the mountain that had beaten him seven years before. With a French mountaineer King reached the summit of what he thought was Mount Whitney. But swirling clouds hid the neighboring peaks from view; if the day had been clear, King would have seen that the real Mount Whitney stood immediately to the north. He later penned a stirring account of this ascent, but his boast of being the first to reach "the summit of the United States" turned to ashes in his mouth when the mistake was revealed in August, 1873. In New York at the time, King was greatly embarrassed. He left immediately for the West Coast, and on September 19 reached the top of the true Mount Whitney. He could no longer claim the honor of being first, however, for several climbing parties had beaten him there in the preceding weeks.

The season in which he climbed the wrong Mount Whitney proved memorable to King in more felicitous ways. In August, under a brilliant Colorado sky, he met Henry Adams and began a thirty-year friendship with that scion of Boston's august political family. Most people who are familiar with King today know him from the memorable characterization by Adams in his enduring autobiography, *The Education of Henry Adams*.

THE SEASON OF 1872 CLOSED OUT the fortieth parallel survey's active work in the field. For King it was a year best remembered for his exposure of the Great Diamond Hoax and publication of *Mountaineering in the Sierra Nevada*, his account of the outdoor life that has been called "the first real literature of the Sierra." In the more mundane task of directing the fortieth parallel survey, meanwhile, King was gaining distinction among the scientific community. The first in a series of detailed reports on the survey region appeared in 1870: *Mining Industry*, describing the principal mining districts between the Comstock and the gold fields of Colorado,

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proved a milestone in the mining literature of America, and subsequent volumes on the region's paleontology, petrology, and geography were equally well received. The crowning achievement in the series was *Systematic Geology,* written by King and published in 1878, detailing the author's comprehensive theory on the evolution of the basin-and-range system along the fortieth parallel. The massive, 800-page study laid out the geologic history of a third of the continent and served as the standard work on the subject well into the twentieth century.

In 1879 Clarence King was appointed director of the newly created United States Geological Survey, charged with the systematic classification of federal lands west of the Mississippi. By this time, King's enthusiasm for government service was beginning to wane, and he understood, as well, the lucrative potential in applied geology. His $6,000 salary as director of the U.S.G.S. could not come close to meeting the financial needs of a man-of-the-world with an increasingly extravagant lifestyle. Determined to capitalize on his vast knowledge of Western terrain acquired during sixteen years

Clarence King (standing at center) *and members of the United States Geological Survey of the Fortieth Parallel pause for their photograph somewhere in the expanse of the Great Basin. King set high standards for his party, requiring meticulous work in practical aspects, and offered interpretations of data that led to new hypotheses in geological inquiry. His field work and subsequent writings made important contributions to scientific knowledge about the region he explored.*

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in the field, King passed the reins of the Geological Survey to John Wesley Powell in 1880 and set out on a new phase of his life as entrepreneur.

King launched into a series of silver mining ventures centered chiefly in Mexico, raising money among his friends and directing operations from a New York office. Despite obvious potential, none of the mines lived up to promise. By 1883 a need for more capital gave King an excuse for a European voyage to seek additional backers. He expected to spend only a few months away but wound up tarrying for more than a year, succumbing easily to what a fellow expatriate called the "infectious orgy of idleness and frivolity" that seemed to afflict all visiting Americans. King traveled through England and France and made a lazy tour of Spain, paying homage to Cervantes. In London and Paris he hobnobbed with the best bohemian society, charming Rothschilds and princes with his uproarious tales of Western life or talking till dawn about women and literature and art. On one unforgettable occasion he met the intellectual hero of his youth, aged John Ruskin, who sold King the last two Turner paintings from his London home.

Enamored of European society and culture, King spent a minimum of time on business and in the end failed to find new investors for the Mexican mines. His long absence without results exasperated his American stockholders, and they forced his resignation. This was the first significant failure King had ever experienced and a severe blow to his pride.

THERE WERE OTHER SCHEMES TO TURN a fortune. In El Paso, Texas, King organized a national bank that went under in the Panic of 1893 and plunged him into debt. The personal and financial strain of such failures began to show. Usually immaculately dressed, King developed a disheveled appearance and suffered lapses of memory. Exacerbated by a spinal inflammation, his mental condition deteriorated, and he was temporarily committed to Bloomingdale Asylum in upper Manhattan. It was the low point of his life, but King managed to keep his sense of humor concerning his "institution of learning" with its "open, frank lunatics." Before long, he was discharged and on his way to Cuba with Henry Adams for a short vacation that restored his spirits.

Thanks to his consulting work King managed a comfortable living, although the riches to which he aspired always eluded him. His desire for riches stemmed from an appreciation of the esthetic lifestyle that wealth could bring. He was an inveterate if undiscriminating art collector and had visions of becoming a great patron of the arts. He was also a sybarite and dandy who even in his days with the fortieth parallel survey exhibited epicurean tastes, dining on boiled mutton and caper sauce in the remotest parts of the West. On respite from field work in San Francisco, "Kingy" sported a cane, tight doeskin trousers, and lemon gloves; later, on his European tour, he fancied a green velvet suit with knickers for his role as boulevardier.

Although King flirted with the idea of marriage to a San

King broke under the strain of personal and financial failures. It was the low point of his life.

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(Opposite, above) *In camp near Salt Lake City, Utah, October, 1868, explorer King looked the part of dignified administrator in his three-piece suit, derby, and gloves. A story has it that King sometimes employed a black manservant to serve his meals in the field.* (Opposite, below) *King's private consulting, as well as his official work, took him to many parts of the West during the 1880s and 1890s. In this beautiful scene, King* (foreground, in derby) *and a colleague have pitched their tent near a waterfall on the Snake River in Idaho.* (Above) *In this elegant, green velvet suit and jaunty tam-o'-shanter, King toured western Europe in 1883. He was the darling of European society, but he was unsuccessful in raising financial backing for his mining interests.*

Francisco girl while in his twenties, he remained a lifelong bachelor—at least in the public eye. In his forties, however, he entered into a secret relationship that did not become generally known until more than thirty years after his death. Only his closest friends were aware of his common-law arrangement with Ada Todd, a young black woman whom he met in 1887 when she was employed as a nursemaid by a Manhattan acquaintance of his. King's letters reveal his deep affection for Ada. He set her up in an eleven-room house with servants in Flushing where she eventually bore him five children. King would visit the house between business trips, passing himself off to the neighbors as a porter. In this secret world he employed the pseudonym of James Todd, which is how Ada knew him until shortly before his death, when he revealed his true identity to her.

To support his growing family King worked himself to the edge of exhaustion in his various business ventures. In 1899, during an extended stay in Butte, Montana, on a mining consulting job, he contracted what was probably pneumonia. Soon, tuberculosis developed, and his health declined precipitously. Sensing that his days might be numbered, King set up a trust for Ada and arranged for her and the children to move to Toronto where the attitude toward blacks was more enlightened than in New York.

His affairs in order, the fifty-nine-year-old King journeyed to Arizona for whatever relief the dry climate might afford his ravaged lungs. He died on the day before Christmas, 1901.

The frustrations of later years cannot detract from King's youthful contributions to American geology and the literature of the West. Nor can they obscure the evanescent personality to which so many attested. The Clarence King who endures in our imagination is not the older, unsuccessful entrepreneur but the young adventurer—dashing across the amber foothills of a California autumn or riding toward glory at a place called Diamond Mesa.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

Most of the details for this article are from *Clarence King* (1958), an engaging biography by Columbia University scholar Thurman Wilkins. *King of the Mountains,* a monograph by James M. Shebl published in 1974 by the Pacific Center for Western Historical Studies, examines King's life and work from a historical and literary perspective. The assessment of King as a geologist comes from the unpublished senior thesis of Hunter S. Baker, on file in the Princeton University Library. King's *Mountaineering in the Sierra Nevada* (1872) is currently available in paperback from the University of Nebraska Press. The Great Diamond Hoax has been chronicled in *Diamonds in the Salt* (1967) by Bruce A. Woodward; *The Great Diamond Hoax and Other Stirring Incidents in the Life of Asbury Harpending* (1915), edited by James H. Wilkins, provides a firsthand account of the fraud.

J. I. Merritt, *based in Princeton, New Jersey, is a freelance writer who specializes in Western history subjects. He has written an introduction to a new edition of Clarence King's* Mountaineering in the Sierra Nevada, *to be published in 1983 by Peregrine Smith, Inc. of Layton, Utah.*

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Frederick Coombs

Eccentric daguerrean in early California

by Peter E. Palmquist

Fancying that he resembled George Washington, flamboyant Frederick Coombs took to wearing colonial-period garb in his later years. In this photograph, Coombs stands by a banner that probably related difficulties arising from one of his numerous entrepreneurial schemes. The skulls are reminiscent of his interest in the study of phrenology.

COURTESY CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY, SAN FRANCISCO

JUMPING BABIES DAGUERREOTYPED," proclaimed the advertisement. "Children taken in one second beautifully perfect or no charge made." It was San Francisco in 1850—the very time when sturdy posing-stools and fearsome head-clamps were considered absolutely *de rigueur* for the portrait photographer. It was a period when instantaneous image-making was unknown, and any movement by the sitter during the plate's long exposure resulted in disaster.

Daguerreotyping jumping babies—a fraudulent claim? Tongue-in-cheek advertising? Perhaps, for pioneer San Francisco daguerrean Frederick Coombs (1803–1874) had a long history of unusual and ofttimes flamboyant assertions about his various enterprises. Mostly, however, Coombs's extravagant notice reflected the times—the transient, shifting fortunes of the frontier where men and women rushed helter-skelter from opportunity to opportunity, and occupational longevity was measured in days rather than years. One *had* to be brash and enterprising to be noticed in the turmoil that characterized gold-rush San Francisco.

Like so many others in nineteenth-century America, English immigrant Coombs had tried his hand at many different trades prior to taking up photography. For instance, as a Professor of Phrenology he wrote a book, *Coombs' Popular Phrenology,* published in 1841. At that time he advertised that he would "give liberal prices for well-authenticated foreign skulls" to enhance his collection. During the same period he actually went so far as to feel the bumps on the head of the vice-president of the United States. In 1839, Coombs devised an electro-magnetic locomotive which pulled passengers along a track at the American Institute in New York, an organization that granted him a diploma. In his role as Distinguished Missionary of Science and Art (Coombs *loved* titles), he lectured on animal and phreno-magnetism to audiences in Boston, New York, Washington, and in Mississippi and Arkansas. With these diverse interests, it was only natural that he try his hand at the new art of daguerreotyping.

Coombs learned photography in Saint Louis in 1846, then moved to Alton, Illinois, where he daguerreotyped soldiers on their way to the Mexican War. By 1848 he was active in Chicago, remaining there until the discovery of gold in Sutter's millrace drew him to California in '49.

Self-proclaimed proprietor of the "first and largest daguerrean gallery in California," Coombs may have exaggerated only slightly. As yet no record of photographic activity in California prior to 1849 has been documented, and in that year only a small number of daguerreans existed. Since most, if not all, pioneer photographers were transient artists who plied their trade from local hotel rooms, Coombs may well have started the first *permanent* photographic establishment in the region.

Founding a daguerrean business in frontier San Francisco was only the first hurdle; surviving was yet another matter. It has been said that San Francisco during the gold rush was like the scene of a great battle—shopkeepers opened one day, only to be robbed the next, and fires were so numerous that by 1852 virtually nothing remained of pioneer San Francisco. Coombs was one of the so-called survivors.

On the first of May, 1850, Coombs began moving his gallery to a new location on Clay Street. By 11:00 P.M. on the third, he had finished nailing down the studio carpet for his grand opening—but, at 4:00 A.M. the gallery burned to the ground. All was not lost, as Coombs was able to salvage most of his apparatus and goods. He immediately reopened, only to be burnt-out again in another city-wide conflagration on June 14. Again, he persevered.

This time Coombs prospered for nearly a year at his new studio before the fire demon struck for the third time. The calamitous San Francisco fire of May 4, 1851, had scarcely a parallel; within ten hours, fifteen hundred buildings were destroyed. Coombs lost everything, "even the cloak from his back, burned whilst running through the fiery furnace, the planked street and both sides of the street all on fire, and when returning consciousness came, he was sitting on a man's knee...half suffocated, but wholly uninjured." Unfortunately, only four of his daguerreotypes (three views of San Francisco and one portrait) remain today.

Like the mythological Phoenix, Coombs once more lifted himself from the ashes of disaster. His Daguerrean Gallery reopened on Montgomery Street only to be run out of business by what he termed his "4th fire"—a business competitor and his own landlord conspired to swindle him out of his business.

Finally, it was enough. Coombs abandoned photography, but he once again revealed the panache and ingenuity that characterize the true entrepreneur. Choosing a new occupation—matrimonial promoting—he speculated: "If all the rich were to marry all the poor, would this not realize a beautiful equality?" To attract women to California, he assembled a traveling museum of curiosities, including: "Exotic birds and wildflowers, Grizzly bears and mountain cats, Indian carvings, potatoes, a wild pig, and Gold! Gold! Gold!" which he transported to Chicago in 1852.

Among many other endeavors, Coombs traveled as a temperance lecturer, going as far afield as Melbourne, Australia, where he was arrested for "attempting to conduct a lottery." As time passed, his eccentricities earned him numerous (if spurious) mentions in the press. His dress and appearance became more and more exotic. Noting that he bore some resemblance to George Washington, he began to wear the three-cornered hat, coat, waistcoat, and knee breeches of the colonial period. Lace, black silk stockings, and low shoes with heavy buckles completed his outfit. With his long white hair flowing gracefully in the wind and a delicate court sword at his side, the former pioneer photographer, now a California legend, made a strikingly impressive figure during his strolls along San Francisco's Montgomery Street.

Peter E. Palmquist *is a frequent contributor of photographs and articles on nineteenth-century Western photographers.*

THE AMERICAN WEST REVIEW

The Frémont Cannon: High Up and Far Back

Reviewed by Peter Wild

The Frémont Cannon: High Up and Far Back *by Ernest Allen Lewis (Arthur H. Clark Company, Glendale, California, 1981; 168 pp., illus., maps, biblio., appen., notes, index, $32.50).*

Somewhere on the slopes of Mount 8422 not far from Lake Tahoe sits an old brass cannon. It is there because in the winter of 1844 John C. Frémont, characteristically underestimating the hazards ahead, threw himself against the snowy eastern escarpment of the Sierra Nevada in a reckless push for California. In the process he nearly lost his small band of soldiers to starvation and cold. A party of Washoe Indians bearing pine nuts aided "The Pathfinder," as the military explorer came to be known, and some days later the little troop blundered thankfully through the range onto the sunny lowlands. In the struggle to survive, Frémont left behind the burdensome howitzer, the focus of this book.

Scholars, so detractors are wont to snicker, study more and more about less and less, and even scholars sometimes agree, bemoaning the lackluster chore of ever dividing and defining. Yet *The Frémont Cannon* is at least one example proving the contrary, that years of research on a seemingly minor detail can be not only historically enlightening but, yes, full of adventure. For one thing, perhaps coming second to Sir Francis Drake's famous "Ye Platte of Brass," the cannon represents "one of the last unfound artifacts of the early western history of the United States," asserts author Ernest Lewis.

What museum eager to impress would not love to have the cannon proudly displayed? Well, one already claims to have it. For years tourists have gazed at a cannon labeled as Frémont's in the Nevada Museum at Carson City. The wrong one, claims Lewis. And his documentation, puzzled together after years of persistent searching, backs up his statement. With convincing argument, Lewis leads us step-by-step in the harried explorer's tracks and through the maze of legend surrounding the "wrong" Frémont cannon to the right one.

On its most pleasurable level, this is a treasure hunt, suitable both for the scholar and layman. Lewis begins by outlining the ups and downs in the career of the ambitious and mercurial Frémont. He touches on his secret marriage to the daughter of powerful Senator Thomas Hart Benton, on his quick rise to millionaire status in California, his thwarted attempt at the Presidency, and the collapse of his financial empire. The nonspecialist will find the background valuable, though Frémont authorities might skip on to the chapters concerning the high and windy slopes of a rarely visited Sierra peak and try to get a glimpse of corroding brass shining dully through the bushes.

At first thought the search would seem an easy-enough venture, a Sunday excursion for the family, a side trip for the vacationer. The author, after all, provides us not with one map but two, the first drawn by the expedition's cartographer and the second a large foldout with a red arrow pointing to the goal. As if that were not enough, Frémont kept a diary which details the spot where his party camped on the day he decided to give up the half-ton impediment. Yet finding the desired hunk of metal is not so simple as it may sound. Mount 8422, small and innocent on the map, is a huge and rugged peak, far from roads, broken by cliffs, guarded by a family of bears and, worse, by millions of biting ants. In his exertions the author himself suffered a heart attack among its jumbled boulders. He cautions those who have the itch to follow his trail to temper their exploratory lust with caution.

If, as adventures go, difficulties serve to whet keenness for the prize, we have further difficulties. We may know the location of the snowy saddle where Frémont camped when he abandoned his awkward twelve pounder, but the worn-out men who joyously received the message to give up pushing and tugging at their burden lagged some distance behind. In other words, the exact site cannot be pinpointed. Furthermore, anticipating future salvage, the soldiers possibly cached the piece, burying it in nearby rocks. Or, the author speculates on his own fruitless searches, Indians may have later pushed it over a nearby precipice, so that it now lies beneath tons of debris. The cannon hunter will have his work cut out for him.

Yet by the end of the book, the reader almost is rooting for the little howitzer, hoping that, like some wily desperado, it will remain secure in its hideaway. In any case, perhaps its location is not nearly so important as how it got there. Lewis follows in its wheel tracks as Frémont hauls his fieldpiece on a zigzag course for thirty-nine hundred miles across the West, filling in details about its keepers along the way. Take Charles Preuss, the expedition's German-born topographer. Though he tried to mask his feelings, the constant hassles with the cannon got on the map-maker's nerves. Preuss came to hate the cannon, scribbling away at one point to his diary, "If we had only left that ridiculous thing at home," and at another, "What monkey business!" With a measure of poetic justice, Preuss was the man in charge of the trailing group that bid the troublesome object a final goodbye.

Then there are the living legends. In 1928, Harry Tom, a Paiute Indian and reliable guide, stumbled on a cannon while hunting on Mount 8422. He forgot about the incident until Ella Cain, a local historian, jogged his memory. He drew her a map, but, fearing people would laugh at him, Tom swore her to secrecy. Ella Cain honored Tom's trust until her death in 1966, but no one seems able to find the sketch among her unsorted papers. While filling in important historical gaps, *The Frémont Cannon* piques with just such delicious agonies.

A Pulitzer prize nominee, **Peter Wild** *is the author of some twenty volumes of poetry and the prose study* Pioneer Conservationists of Western America. *He is a professor of English at the University of Arizona.*

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Letters *(Continued from page 9)*

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Hugh Mann
Memphis, Tenn.

Nicolai Fechin

Dear Editor:

Congratulations on a superb magazine—a real keeper. I especially treasured your Nicolai Fechin article, having been fortunate enough to have studied with him in California—briefly, because he was then in his declining years.

I learned the technique of "absorbent oil painting" from both him and Leon Franks, a friend and disciple of Mr. Fechin. Both were extraordinary persons, as well as unequalled in their artistic accomplishments and sensitivity.

I am rich, having been exposed to their talents and even richer being able to read your account of Nicolai Fechin. Thanks.

Bleu Stroud
Marble, Colorado

St. Johns

Dear Editor:

Stuart Udall's sharing of his St. Johns boyhood experiences was a reminiscence we can all re-learn from. Would that he were still Secretary of the Interior!

H. Jane Nauman
Custer, South Dakota

THE AMERICAN WEST welcomes relevant letters from its readers. We will endeavor to print a cross section of those we receive. Please address: Letters to the Editor, THE AMERICAN WEST, P.O. Box 40310, Tucson, Arizona 85717.

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WESTERN BOOKS IN BRIEF

American Frontiers: The Photographs of Timothy H. O'Sullivan, 1867–1874, *selected and written by Joel Snyder (Aperture, Millerton, New York, 1981; 119 pp., illus., notes, biblio., $35.00).*
Timothy O'Sullivan's haunting photographs capture the sweep of unspoiled Western landscapes in the 1860s and 1870s. This book beautifully reproduces a number of O'Sullivan's views of Western grandeur and describes his career as official photographer for Clarence King and other geologist explorers.

Yuwipi: Vision and Experience in Oglala Ritual *by William K. Powers (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1982; 126 pp., maps, biblio., glossary, index, $13.95).*
A contemporary Oglala Sioux Indian father and son seek help through vision quest and sweat-lodge rituals in the Yuwipi healing ceremony. Their experience is told vividly and without added comment.

Buffalo Bill and the Wild West, *published for an exhibition which is a joint project of The Brooklyn Museum; the Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute; and the Buffalo Bill Historical Center (University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, 1981; 96 pp., illus., biblio., $11.95 paper).*
This large-format paperback provides a colorful celebration of the images of the "Wild West" popularized by Buffalo Bill Cody through his traveling show. More than two hundred illustrations include color reproductions of posters and paintings, historic photographs, and movie stills. Several accompanying essays highlight various aspects of Cody's life and his influence on popular ideas about the West.

Captain Cook's Final Voyage: The Journal of Midshipman George Gilbert, *introduced and edited by Christine Holmes (University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1982; 166 pp., illus., maps, notes, $20.00).*
A young seaman describes life on Captain James Cook's Pacific voyage between 1776 and 1780. With two small sailing ships, Cook's party unsuccessfully searched for a Northwest Passage. On the same lengthy voyage, they discovered the Hawaiian Islands, where the Captain met his death.

The Great American Depression Book of Fun *by John O'Dell (Harper & Row, New York, 1981; 218 pp., illus., $9.95 paper).*
The author of this unabashedly nostalgic backward look recreates the summer of 1934 in a small Oklahoma farm town. Accompanying his reminiscences are instructions and sketches for making one hundred delightful, homemade toys from such materials as spools, tin cans, scrap lumber, and old tires.

Alaska: Images of the Country *by John McPhee, photographs by Galen Rowell (Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, 1981; 160 pp., illus., map, $37.50).*
John McPhee's masterful word-portraits of people, wildlife, and places join with over one hundred striking color photographs to celebrate the many faces of contemporary Alaska, "the last frontier."

Sky Pioneering: Arizona in Aviation History *by Ruth M. Reinhold (University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1982; 246 pp., illus., maps, biblio., index. $19.95 cloth, $10.95 paper).*
Dirigibles and transcontinental air races, flights through the Grand Canyon and the ignominious crash of a plane carrying Leo, the MGM lion—Arizona's aviation history is related in colorful detail. Many photos of strange flying machines are included.

Chief Left Hand: Southern Arapaho *by Margaret Coel (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1981; 352 pp., illus., maps, notes, biblio., index, $15.95).*
Coel's readable, engrossing narrative examines the fateful years of the mid-1800s when large numbers of gold seekers entered Plains Indian territory. The story centers around Chief Left Hand, linguist and diplomat, who was among the first of his tribe to acknowledge the inevitability of the white

(Continued on page 70)

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soldiers from our own or other armies. Several of the men who died with Custer had been members of the Vatican Guard. Chris Madsen, who with Heck Thomas and Bill Tilghman made up the "Three Guardsmen" of Oklahoma's boom years, was a Dane who had served in the Danish army as well as in the French Foreign Legion before coming to America to join the Fifth Cavalry.

Manuel Alvarez, fur trader and trapper, has been referred to as "a cultured gentleman." He was later a prominent political leader and the United States Consul in Santa Fe. Benjamin Wilson, for whom Mount Wilson is named, was a trapper before going to California to become a business man, rancher, and political leader. William Wolfskill, who had the first commercial citrus grove and one of the first vineyards in southern California, was for several years a mountain man, as were several others who helped to shape Los Angeles into a city.

Teddy Blue, whose *We Pointed Them North* is a classic of the cattle drives, was born at Cranwich Hall, Norfolk, England. Frank Collinson, who wrote *Life in the Saddle,* was a buffalo hunter, a cowboy and rancher, and was born in Yorkshire, England. Alexander Barclay, who had been a corset manufacturer in England, came West to become a mountain man, fur trader, and superintendent of Bent's Fort.

The fur traders and trappers, called mountain men, were by and large extremely intelligent men who shifted quickly to other pursuits when the fur trade became less remunerative. It was often a profitable business, but hard and dangerous. Of those who survived, a very large percentage did well in other lines, in other places.

> Men who went West were of every kind, and there is no stereotype. The sun, the wind, and the saddle turned them into Western men, no matter their origin.

One never knew to whom he was talking in those years, for many outsiders fell into the Western vernacular and rhythm of living. Such artists as John James Audubon (more famed as a naturalist, perhaps), Karl Bodmer, Alfred Jacob Miller, Albert Bierstadt, George Catlin, and Thomas Moran were only a few who travelled in and painted the West.

Sir Richard Burton, translator of the *Arabian Nights,* who led the expedition that discovered the source of the Nile River, travelled in the West and wrote an excellent book about it. The Marquis de Mores and Teddy Roosevelt ranched in the West, as did Oliver Wallop, who after thirty years of ranching in Wyoming returned to England to take a seat in the House of Lords.

The Earl of Southesk travelled and hunted in Western Canada, reading Shakespeare the while and writing comments on his work. Prince Maximilian of Wied, Sir George Gore, the Grand Duke Alexis, and many other gentlemen of title travelled in or lived for a time in the West.

The "Man on Horseback" has ever been a romantic figure. The knight in armor, the Cossack, the Bedouin of the desert, the cavalryman and the cowboy have all appealed to the imagination, and many who came West were boys from farms or small towns, who wanted to ride the Western lands. No matter that the hours were long, no matter that the work was brutally hard and dangerous, no matter that the life held no future if you stayed with it, they all wanted to ride. Many a dry-as-dust old cowboy, who would not admit it for the world, saw himself as a romantic figure. If he did not have hand-stitched boots and gaudy shirts, it was not because he did not want them but simply because he could not afford them.

Jeff Milton, cowhand, Texas Ranger, chief of police in El Paso, and Border Patrolman, was a son of a governor of Florida, and a descendant of John Milton, the poet. He was a famed Western gunfighter. Another such was Temple Houston, a lawyer as well as a gunfighter, and a son of Sam Houston.

Eugene Manlove Rhodes and Will James were cowhands who became writers; Albert B. Fall, later Secretary of the Interior, was a cowboy who carried law books in his saddlebags and studied when he could; Charley Colcord was a cowhand who became an oil man. Edward L. Doheny, who once washed dishes in Dodge City and mined in Kingston, New Mexico, became a multimillionaire oil man in Los Angeles.

They all rode into the West when it and they were young. When they rode out, if they ever did, they still carried the West in their hearts and bore its mark upon them. No matter who they were or where they came from, the sun, the wind, and the saddle turned them into Western men. ✪

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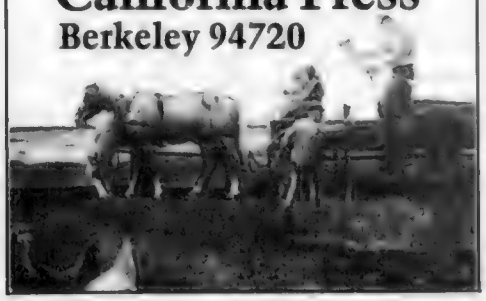

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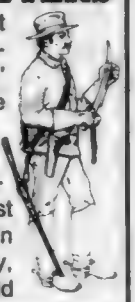

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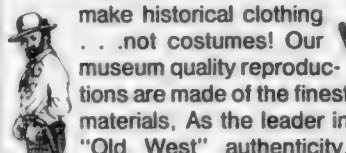

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man's presence in what is now Colorado. Government reports, manuscripts, diaries, and letters, some previously overlooked by historians, form the basis for this detailed biography.

He Was Singin' This Song: A Collection of Forty-Eight Traditional Songs of the American Cowboy, with Words, Music, Pictures and Stories, *by Jim Bob Tinsley (University Presses of Florida, Orlando, 1981; 269 pp., illus., biblio., index. $30.00).*
Much more than a songbook, this delightful collection revolves around forty-eight, well-known, old, cowboy songs. Stories behind the songs, plus numerous fascinating, old pictures, form a treasure trove of Western lore.

Down the River *by Edward Abbey (E. P. Dutton, New York, 1982; 256 pp., illus., $13.95 cloth, $6.95 paper).*
Abbey's iconoclastic, exuberant essays carry a deep feeling for the Southwestern land. A number of the pieces in this volume, springing out of float trips Abbey has taken down various Western rivers, mix descriptions of river experiences with penetrating musings on Western life today.

American Frontier Tales *by Helen Addison Howard (Mountain Press Publishing Company, Missoula, Montana, 1982; 293 pp., illus., maps, notes, index, $15.95 cloth, $8.95 paper).*
These tales, which relate real historical incidents, are presented in an easy, narrative style. Frontier action abounds in the stories, chosen for retelling because of new evidence that in each case refutes misconceptions formerly considered to be historical truths.

Old Deadwood Days *by Estelline Bennett (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1982; 314 pp., illus., $18.95 cloth, $6.50 paper).*
A judge's daughter who grew up in Deadwood, South Dakota, in the 1880s recalls gunfighters and bull-whackers, gamblers and painted ladies in this engaging firsthand account.

Stickeen *by John Muir, with an afterword by Malcolm Margolin (Heyday Books, Berkeley, 1981; 93 pp., chronology, $3.95 paper).*
John Muir relates a tense, exhilarating tale of a stormy day on an Alaskan glacier with his mongrel dog, Stickeen. Muir's general activities in Alaska are briefly described in Margolin's afterword.

Nature in the West: A Handbook of Habitats *by Richard and Jacob Rabkin (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1981; 256 pp., illus., maps, appen., index, $17.95 cloth, $10.95 paper).*
Bright, charming, watercolor illustrations accompany verbal sketches of the many ecosystems found in Western parks, monuments, and wildlife refuges. The informal text is filled with information to enrich travelers' experiences of the widely varied plants and animals living together in different Western environments.

Totem Poles: An Illustrated Guide *by Marjorie M. Halpin (University of British Columbia Press, Vancouver, 1981; 64 pp., illus., map, biblio., $19.95 cloth, $7.95 paper).*
This attractive paperback answers the question, "What is a totem pole?" with the aid of many striking photographs. A brief, clear text describes the roots of totem pole art in Northwest Indian culture and tells what to look for when viewing totem poles in a museum.

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Western Snapshots

Henry Alexander DeWoody and his "peddlin' wagon" were a familiar sight in the countryside of Fannin County, Texas, around 1900, when this picture was taken. Special wooden cases inside this portable variety store opened to reveal dry goods and all the little things a farm wife would like to have without making the long trip into town. Cages in the back of the wagon held live chickens, accepted by DeWoody as payment along with eggs and fresh vegetables. If the weather turned bad, canvas sides could be pulled down to keep the treasures in the rolling store safe from wind and rain.

When he returned to town, DeWoody traded some of the produce he had collected for more items to stock his wagon and used the remainder to supplement his farm income. While he was away on his route, which he covered regularly, his wife and children tended to farm chores.

In the years between 1887 and 1921, DeWoody acquired two wives, fifteen children, and three step-children. Thirteen children survived to live in Arkansas and Texas. DeWoody's great-granddaughter, Debbie Warner of Roseville, California, who sent us this picture, tells us that the faithful mules who pulled the peddlin' wagon on its rounds were named Jonny and Rody.

AMERICAN WEST offers twenty-five dollars to any reader whose Western snapshot is accepted for publication on this page. We seek old photographs which tell stories of bygone times. Especially welcome are pictures depicting some forgotten aspect of Western life, serious or amusing. Space is limited: so, we have to be selective. We'll take good care of your pictures and return them promptly. Be sure to pack the snapshots carefully and enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Send submissions to AMERICAN WEST, Western Snapshots, P.O. Box 40310, Tucson, Arizona 85717.

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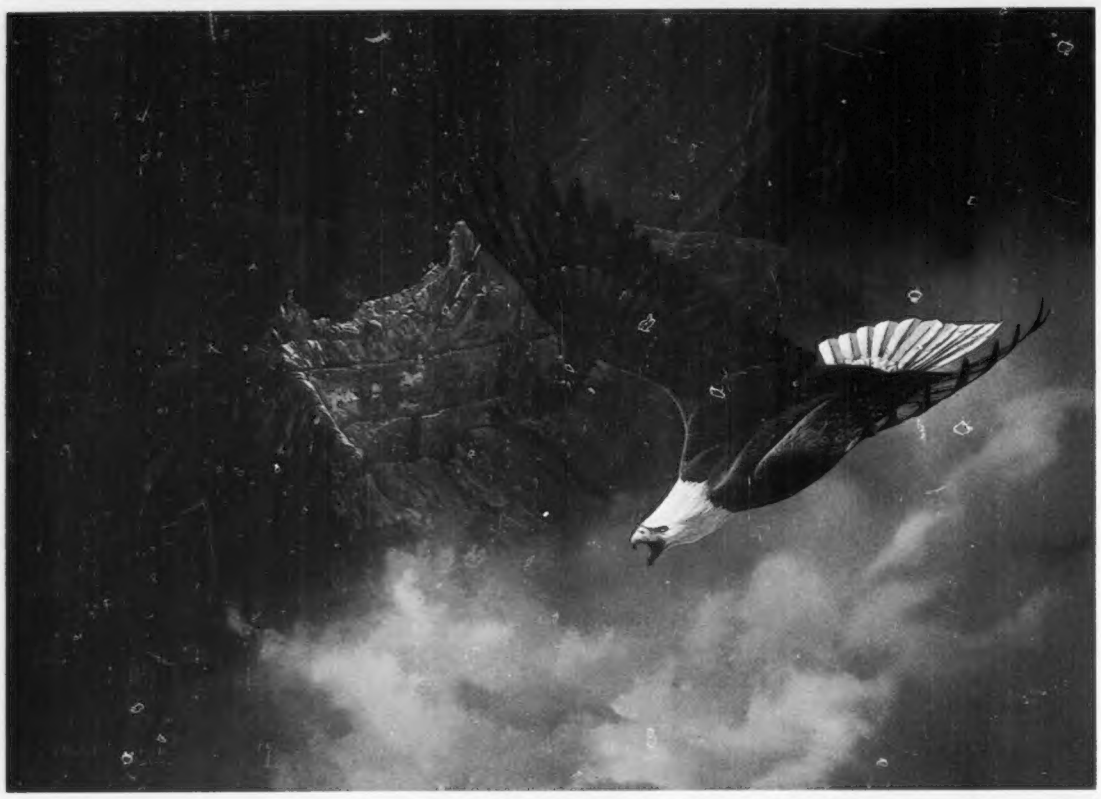

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